

RAPHAEL'S  
MADONNA  
GONZAGA



TECHNICAL PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY  
AND HISTORY OF THE  
PAINTING

BY

JOHN T. GLODT



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BOSTON

RAPHAEL

MADONNA GONZAGA  
(ON EXHIB. AT 500 BOYLSTON ST.)

**Raphael's**  
**Madonna Gonzaga**

**Technical proofs of Authenticity**  
**and history of the**  
**painting**

**BY**

**JOHN T. GLODT**

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION.....	3
II. VARIOUS OPINIONS ON THE MADONNA GONZAGA.....	14
III. IDEA AND SYMBOLISM OF THE BOSTON PAINTING.....	22
IV. PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY. (A) COMPOSITION.....	23
V. PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY (CONTINUED) (B) RAPHAEL'S TECHNIQUE.....	43
VI. PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY (CONCLUDED) (C) SIGNATURES.....	55
SEQUENCE OF ARGUMENTS.	
VII. HISTORY OF THE MADONNA GONZAGA THE PAINTING IN ROME.....	72
VIII. THE PAINTING IN MANTUA.....	95
IX. THE PAINTING IN ENGLAND.....	109
X. THE PAINTING IN SPAIN.....	127
XI. THE PAINTING IN THE HANDS OF JOSEPH BONAPARTE.....	136
XII. THE PAINTING IN BOSTON.....	157
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	170





# ILLUSTRATIONS

	OPP. PAGE
1. (Frontispiece); MADONNA GONZAGA. Boston. Raphael. ....	
2. (Detail); THE CHILD CHRIST Boston. Raphael..	12
3. (Detail); HEAD OF THE MADONNA GONZAGA Boston Raphael. ....	16
4. (Opposite); TYPES OF MOTHER AND CHILD. Oxford drawing. Raphael. ....	22
5. STUDY FOR A MADONNA. Oxford. Raphael....	26
6. STUDY FOR A MADONNA. Malcom Collection. Raphael. ....	30
7. MOTHER AND CHILD. Raphael. ....	34
8. RAPHAEL, BY HIMSELF. Offices. Florence.....	36
9. OLD MANTUAN MADONNA. ....	40
10. MADONNA DELLA SEDIA. Pitti Gallery, Florence. Raphael. ....	44
11. MADONNA DELLA TENDA. Munich. Raphael....	46
12. MADONNA DEL GRANDUCA. Pitti Gallery, Florence. Raphael. ....	54
13. Saint Barbara.....	66
14. ISABELLA D'ESTE. Boston. Mrs. Gardner's collection. ....	72
15. LEONARDO DA VINCI DYING IN THE ARMS OF FRANCIS I. Ingres. Polidoro Caldara (?) Copyright by Thomas E. Marr, 1910. ....	96

16.	CHARLES I. OF ENGLAND AND FAMILY. Van Dyck. Boston Museum of Fine Arts.....	100
17.	CROMWELL AT WHITEHALL. Shrader.....	114
18.	PHILIP IV., KING OF SPAIN. Velasquez. Boston Museum of Fine Arts.....	126
19.	NAPOLEON CROSSING THE ALPS. Louvre, Paris. David. ....	132
20.	JOSEPH BONAPARTE, KING OF SPAIN. Gérard. ...	134
21.	THE CHILD CHRIST AND ST. JOHN (Detail of a lost painting by Rubens). Vienna. School of Rubens.....	142
22.	MADONNA GONZAGA (Philadelphia mezzotint). Boston. ....	152
23.	EUGENE BEAUHARNAIS, DUKE OF LEUCHTENBERG.	162
24.	MADONNA LEUCHTENBERG (Munich lithography). Boston. ....	164

## Introduction

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Boston was aroused a few years ago by the discovery of a Madonna by Raphael. The papers announced the event in large and conspicuous headlines, and gave a cut of the painting. The composition looked Raphaelesque, but could this be a genuine work by the divine Sanzio? The claim looked pretentious to the students of art. They had been in European galleries, they had admired Raphael's works, and here, they were asked to believe, was Boston harboring for three generations a Madonna by the greatest of artists, without knowing anything about its priceless treasure.

Of these art students many came to the studio (1) where the painting is now on exhibition, with an incredulous smile on their lips, only to see their doubts vanish and their admiration increase as they fixed their enraptured gaze on this marvel of art. Painters who had copied

(1) Ryan and Duffee, 500 Boylston St., Boston, Mass.

the works of Raphael, writers who have published books on art, amateurs who delight in visiting galleries of paintings, visitors from all ranks and positions in life flocked to the studio, many to return again and again. Ministers who have made the painting the theme of their discourses, and teachers who have spoken about it to their pupils, have helped greatly in making it known.

Other students, more conservative, admired the painting but entertained doubt as to its origin. Before yielding in their skeptical attitude these men required that technical proofs of the painting's authenticity be given with some information about its history and wanderings from place to place during the four centuries that separate us from Raphael. In other words, they would be satisfied only with a consistent and well connected account of the historical facts which occasioned the transfer of the painting from one country to another. In this monograph an attempt has been made to present these proofs and to retrace the history of the painting.

In his life of Demosthenes, Plutarch says that the historian who undertakes to write a book on a matter at once distant in the past and concerning foreign countries must first of all live in

a city which is populous and famous for its culture, where he may find at hand an abundance of books of all kinds. These conditions are certainly realized in art loving Boston, whose famous public library is rich in books on art. The service is at the same time excellent, so that there is no unnecessary loss of time in obtaining the books required for such work of research.

The only difficulty is in following the painting from one place to another. To follow up all the works of Raphael in their wanderings is well-nigh impossible. They appear and disappear in the course of ages before arriving at the galleries where they are now admired. Unless their wanderings have been few, like those of the Sistine Madonna, or those of the Madonna of Francis I, or of St. Michael Slaying the Dragon, their history cannot be reconstructed. Still it can be done for the Madonna in question. It is such an important production, even when compared to the other paintings by Raphael, that it left records wherever it happened to be. It was always looked upon as one of the finest paintings in the collection where it was for the time being, and at the sale of the paintings belonging to Charles I it was the highest priced for its size. So it is possible to retrace its history.

Not only does the name of Raphael render this

painting interesting, but the period to which it belongs adds to its importance. It is one of the last works of his Roman period, a period when the painter was at his zenith and when kings and princes vied in their efforts to obtain a work of his, were it only a simple drawing. It was left over in his studio after his death; thus it has a place of its own among the works of Sanzio both for its excellence and for the historical interest it presents.

Aside from its technical qualities, the Boston painting forces itself upon our attention for its high devotional character. The Sistine Madonna has been pronounced by many authors the most devotional painting in existence. The Virgin, life-size, stepping on clouds, the figures of the two saints, the lovely little angels at the bottom looking up to heaven, the expression of both Madonna and Child, are apt to create strong devotional feeling. It is a glimpse of heaven such as only Fra Angelico and Raphael could give us. The Boston painting is smaller. The figures are not life-size, but with regard to devotional character the expression of both the Mother and the Child can compare most favorably, at least, with those of the Sistine Madonna. Nothing more beautiful can be conceived. After having painted the features of the Madonna so



BOSTON

RAPHAEL

THE CHILD CHRIST (DETAIL)





often, as only his mind could imagine them, Raphael gives us here his last inspiration of Her who haunted the dreams of so many great masters.

BOSTON, MASS., October 6, 1916.

## CHAPTER I.

### VARIOUS OPINIONS ON THE MADONNA GONZAGA.

Of all the paintings by Raphael there is none that has given rise in the past to more serious discussion and more searching study than the so-called Madonna Gonzaga. The recent discovery of a painting in Boston bearing the unmistakable marks of Raphael's hand has again opened up a line of inquiry regarding its production and subsequent history.

In 1856 Marquis Campori discovered in the archives of the Gonzaga family of Mantua documents in the form of letters exchanged between the Marchioness Isabella d'Este of Mantua and Agostino Gonzaga then residing in Rome. These letters relate to an order given Raphael during the year 1515 for a painting to be executed by him. It is most probable that Raphael was anxious to comply with the request of the most prominent Italian lady of his time. We learn from the documents that he worked on the painting at intervals, but that it was not yet

finished to his satisfaction in 1519. (1) Raphael died the following April.

The question for us to settle is this: Was the painting ever finished and delivered? And if so, what was the subject treated and where is the painting at the present time?

Among art critics we find two different opinions on the subject. Campori, who discovered the documents above referred to, believes that the painting was executed and that it represented a Madonna. Muntz, the best authority on Raphael, accepts his conclusions and says: "This picture, which M. Campori identifies with the small Madonna mentioned in ancient documents as hanging in the gallery of the Duke of Mantua, is now lost." (2)

Crowe and Cavalcaselle are of a quite different opinion. "Nothing," they write, "had come of the promise in 1516 and nothing came of it later, nor was anything likely to come from a man so

(1) Agostino Gonzaga to the Marchioness of Mantua from Rome, June, 1515. Alfonso Paolucci to the Duke of Ferrara, 1519, in Campori's "Notizie e documenti per la vita di Giovanni Santi e di Raffaello Santi," page 10.

(2) Raphael, from the French of Eugène Muntz, London, 1882, page 599.

busy and so energetically pressed by patrons as Raphael was." (1)

Rosenberg, who is one of the latest students of, Raphael and to whom we owe so much research mentions the different unsuccessful attempts to identify the Madonna Gonzaga with some known works by the great artist. He calls attention to four pamphlets recently published on the subject (2) and adds as his own opinion that Isabella apparently never possessed a painting by Raphael. (3)

It is difficult to understand how such a critic as Rosenberg could support this theory of Crowe and Cavalcaselle. Raphael did not neglect this order. There were too many influential personages in Rome to remind him of his promise. Furthermore, the documents show that he worked on the painting at intervals from 1515, when the canvas for the painting with "*la misura del quadro et il lume*" was sent by Isabella through a special envoy from Mantua, to 1519 when Paolucci wrote to his master that the

(1) Raphael, His Life and Work—by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, London, 1885, vol. ii, page 355.

(2) *La petite Sainte-famille de Raphaël, Madonna piccola d'Isabelle de Gonzague*, Paris, 1892, 1896, 1900, E. Jacobsen, "*Die Madonna piccola Gonzaga*," Strassburg, 1906.

(3) Adolphe Rosenberg, *Raffaël*, 4th edition, page 246.



BOSTON

RAPHAEL

THE HEAD OF THE VIRGIN (DETAIL)



painting was yet unfinished. Moreover there was a Madonna by him left over in his studio after his death. The painting was transferred to Mantua and till now has never been identified.

The most comprehensive opinion on this subject is held by Julia Cartwright. This author not only admits the Madonna to have been painted but, for the first time, brings this discovery made by Campori into connection with that of a later historian. "Claude Phillips mentions in his 'Picture Gallery of Charles I' a small Madonna by Raphael, the highest priced of the collection for its size. (1) Among the 'Mantuan pieces' bought by Charles I there were two pictures bearing the great Urbinate's name. One of these was the Holy Family, known as 'la Perla,' a picture painted in Raphael's later days, chiefly by the hands of his assistants, for Lodovico da Canossa, which was afterwards acquired by Duke Vincenzo I. The other was a 'quadretto', described in the inventory of the King's sale as a little Virgin and Child and valued at the high price of £800." (2)

Miss Cartwright then goes on to mention an unsuccessful attempt of Claude Phillips to

(1) Claude Phillips, *Picture Gallery of Charles I*, page 80.

(2) *Isabella d'Este*, by Julia Cartwright, London, 1903, Vol. ii, page 164.

identify this second painting with that of the "Vierge de la maison d'Orléans." She herself, however, is not any more successful than he in her attempt to identify it with the Madonna Mackintosh. "It is possible," she writes, "that this sadly injured painting, which still retains the matchless charm of Raphael's design, may be the picture on which Castiglione watched the great master at work in the last days of his life, and for which Isabella waited so long in vain." (1)

The Madonna Mackintosh, however, was well known long before Raphael's death. A reproduction of this painting is due to Domenico Alfani, who copied the composition already in 1518. (2)

We see, therefore, in the works of the critics this mysterious Madonna mentioned again and again along with their vain efforts to identify it. Going through the catalogues of the best collections in successive ages and through documents relating to the same catalogues, we find mentioned, as we just saw, a small high-priced Madonna by Raphael in Isabella's collection and afterwards in that of Charles I. Of this painting Claude Phillips says, "It is clear that the Madonna so highly estimated must have

(1) Julia Cartwright, *l. c.*, page 80.

(2) See Rosenberg, page 235.



been a well-known and covetable work universally put down to the Master." (1)

This Madonna was sold out of the country in the month of June or July, 1653. (2) Mazarin's agent, M. de Bordeaux, who later assumed the title of French ambassador, made steps to obtain the painting but it had already passed into other hands. We have reasons to believe that Alonzo de Cardenas, the Spanish ambassador, had been more successful and had purchased the Madonna for his royal master.

Passavant, who recorded and described all possible works by Raphael which he was able to find in his researches, mentions a small Madonna, still unidentified, as having been at some date in the Escorial. (3) There it was seen and thus described by Raphael Mengs, the painter and writer: "A Madonna and Child by Raphael, resembling in its composition very closely the Madonna della Sedia in Florence except that the picture in Florence is round in form while the one in Madrid is square; that in the latter the figure of St. John is missing, and

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 80.

(2) Richesses du palais Mazarin, par le comte de Cosnac, page 175.

(3) J. D. Passavant:—Rafael von <sup>U</sup>Urbino, vol. ii, page 406.

that the two remaining figures are of lesser size than those of the Madonna della Sedia." (1)

This description corresponds to a mysterious painting found recently in Boston stored away among the art treasures of an old Puritan family.

Art critics know of at least three of Raphael's Madonnas which have disappeared: the Madonna Gonzaga, the Madonna with the Pink, and that of Loretto. Though the collections of the old world have been carefully searched for lost paintings by Raphael, none of these three Madonnas has been found there. A number of old paintings, however, came over to this country from France and England during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic disturbances which followed. Thus Joseph Bonaparte settled in Bordentown, New Jersey, and sent for his gallery of paintings, while priests in Paris sent their paintings to New France, Canada. Is it not possible that one or two of these Madonnas may have found their way to this country?

It is evident that the Boston picture was widely known before its disappearance. Though there are numerous recent copies of Raphael's works, none had so many reproductions in former ages as this beautiful composition. Up to the

(1) See *Opere di Antonio Raffaello Mengs*, in Bessano, 1783, vol. ii, page 75.

present time seven old lithographs of the painting have been found in Boston alone. Two different ones were made in Berlin, two in Paris, two in Philadelphia, and one in Munich. Six old oil copies are known to exist in Boston, one in the O'Connor Art Gallery at Trinity College, Washington, D. C., another in a Jesuit church in one of the first missions of the State of Washington. Two more have been found in Philadelphia, one in Janesville, Wisconsin, and still another reproducing the Madonna Leuchtenburg, itself a copy of the Boston painting, in Lake Providence, Louisiana. Some of these have been placed side by side with the newly discovered picture in question, leaving no doubt that the latter is the original. A number of photos of old copies, lithographs, mezzotints, or oil paintings, have been sent to the studio where the Madonna is on exhibition. These numerous reproductions bear testimony to the excellence of the long lost painting and show how widely it was known before its disappearance.

In these few pages we shall explain the idea and symbolism of the painting; we shall study its authenticity through its composition, technique, and signatures, and retrace its history from the time it was ordered to our own day.

## CHAPTER II.

### IDEA AND SYMBOLISM OF THE BOSTON PAINTING.

In the painting under consideration the artist meant to represent the Virgin Mother and the Child in colloquy about heavenly things. The text of Holy Scripture exemplified here is undoubtedly that of St. Luke: "And His Mother kept all these words pondering them in her heart" (St. Luke II, v. 19). The Child Jesus seems in the attitude of whispering to His Mother, who holds Him affectionately in her arms while she bends her head towards Him as if listening in silent contemplation. Millet said of his *Angelus*: "I want the beholder to hear the ringing of the evening bell." So here also the painter would create the impression that the Child's lips are moving and that the Mother is listening to His words. The laws of perspective are so well observed that the Child seems to come forth from the canvas.

The expression on both figures is fascinating. Mary's type is quite ideal and belongs to no age and to no race, or rather it belongs to all ages and all nations. Her face is the very expression of piety, meekness, and purity. Raphael once more shows himself master of expression and



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RAPHAEL

TYPES OF MOTHER AND CHILD



renders different ideas, all harmonizing in a wonderful manner. The Virgin's modesty is indicated by her downcast eyes, and this feature, according to travellers who have admired Sanzio's works in Italy and elsewhere, is altogether Raphaelesque and in purest style.

The wonderful curve of the Mother's neck which no copyist, not even Van Dyck, was able to render, brings the Mother's cheek nearer to that of her Son, and thus the idea of mutual, tender embrace is suggested. In the lovely repose of the Child in His Mother's arms motherly affection is again beautifully rendered. Only a mother can hold a child thus.

In this painting there is an oval of light which has been attempted in the *Madonna della Sedia* and *della Tenda*, but not so successfully as here. What Gilbert says about the *Madonna della Sedia* we can with more truth apply to the Boston picture. "In the oval of light the whole of maternal affection seems to be enclosed." (1) The face of the Mother reveals deep attention to the Child's words and happiness and delight to hear what He is saying.

The Child Jesus leaves an impression that cannot be forgotten. Here Raphael "attempts

(1) See *Catholic Encyclopedia*, article Raphael, vol. xii, page 646.

the expression of the supernatural." Although the face is that of a child, yet out of it shines divine wisdom coupled with a rare loveliness. Jesus has here a heavenly smile of happiness. He looks as if eager to say pleasing things to His Mother. Though the Madonna gave the picture its name, still the Christ Child has the greater attraction for us, and, unconsciously too, absorbs all attention. The painter wanted Him to be the more important of the two. His lips are half open as if He were speaking to His Mother. We could apply to Him Robert Browning's words on the Moses of Michael Angelo: "He has so prompt and live the lips, I listen to their very tone." What does he whisper to her? If the look of anguish on the Sistine Madonna seems to reflect Calvary, here her expression indicates heavenly triumph. We seem, as we look, to hear the words, "Thou art all fair, O Mary, and no stain is in thee."

The symbolism as we find it in this painting, reminds us at once of the two other famous Madonnas, the Virgin of the Chair and the Madonna della Tenda. In composition they resemble the Boston picture very closely, with the exception that they both have a third figure, St. John the Baptist. Both are attributed to Raphael by all critics, the Madonna della Sedia



as entirely by his own hand, the Madonna della Tenda as a composition of his, in which several parts may perhaps have been executed by his pupils.

In them as well as in the Boston painting the Child is draped, nestling in His Mother's arms. In all three rays of light radiate in three places from the Infant's head, gleaming in the obscurity of the background. They seem to meet behind that little head, forming a cross, which we fancy growing with the Child till on its outstretched arms the Saviour of mankind is crucified. Murillo and Heinrich Hoffman have this same symbol on their best known masterpieces.

We hardly mention the halo over the Virgin's head, which is traditional on all pictures of the saints. The oval of light may have a deeper meaning than simply to give us an effect of chiaroscuro. The effect of light in a painting is of great importance. It gives prominence to the important figure or figures, aids the perspective, and illustrates the idea expressed in the painting. Here it attracts our attention directly to the Infant and deepens the shadows so that He seems to come forth from the canvas. We may give it a deeper meaning yet. As the oval has no beginning and no end, so God Who

is represented here is the Alpha and Omega of all things.

Symbolical, too, is the expression in the Infant's eyes. If we look at those eyes through a magnifying glass, they assume a wonderful expression of adoration and seem to be fixed on distant visions. This expression, strange to say, is not reproduced by the camera. Raphael, in painting this head of the Christ Child with its heavenly smile and its expression of adoration surpasses himself and gives us an example of the marvelous effects his excellent technique could produce.

Another symbolical meaning lies in the crossing of the Child's hands on His breast. This we find only once in Raphael's other works. There is in the gallery of the Vatican a small painting by Raphael on wood, representing Hope. To the left of this *Speranza* is a little angel standing, who has his arms crossed in the same manner.

If we are to believe Vasari (1) even the colors of the vestments have a symbolical meaning. They typify the elements; red means fire, blue is the color of the air, green that of the earth, and the translucent white of the Child's drapery symbolizes water.

(1) Vasari, vol. iii, Raphael of Urbino, page 151, Scribner's edition, 1897.



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RAPHAEL

STUDY FOR A MADONNA



Raphael's symbolism is interwoven in the figures represented. He had freed himself long ago of those symbolical figures and signs of his early days, when they had little connection with the subject itself. He thus obtained greater unity in his paintings.

He was also the first painter of the Renaissance to free himself of Byzantine stiffness and conventional poses, and his Madonnas are as natural as can be, placed mostly in God's beautiful Nature or in some interior with a side view, through one or two openings, on some distant hill crowned with a castle or a convent. In the Boston picture he limits himself to the two figures with no surroundings; they stand out from the dark background like a vision, a glimpse of heaven.

## CHAPTER III.

### PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY. (A) COMPOSITION.

We come now to the evidence that leads us to conclude that this Madonna is by no one else than the divine Sanzio himself. The proof rests principally on the composition, the technique, and the signatures discovered on the painting.

No master ever equalled Raphael in richness of composition. In this he excelled all his contemporaries of the Renaissance. Whether he creates a group of three or four persons or represents a crowd, there is perfect unity in the composition, every detail contributing towards the idea he wants to represent or the story he wishes to tell. Yet what variety in the types, faces, poses, and folds! Every line is faultless. This excellence of composition is manifested especially in his famous cartoons now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, while his power of varying the same theme can be seen in his numerous Madonnas.

Two facts strike the student of Raphael's paintings. The first is this, that painting the Madonna was his favorite work; and the second

is that a number of his Madonnas have by some kind of fatality unfortunately disappeared. (1)

At the age of seventeen or eighteen years, Raphael entered the studio of Perugino as apprentice. In those days the painters to whom fame had come early received from princes and cardinals, from religious communities and parish churches many orders for the picture of the Madonna. In many cases they did little more than draw the outlines of the painting leaving the development of the picture to their pupils. In the studio of his master, Raphael developed a perfect passion for painting the Madonna. "In a short time," says one writer, "he became a sort of foreman of the studio, supervising the making of those countless Madonnas for which Perugino's studio was the best patronized in Italy." (2) We call this his Umbrian period. While in Florence, several works of his, the Madonna Colonna, now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Madonna Ansdei, now in the National Gallery, London, and his famous Spozalizio, Milan, were still executed in the same style.

During his Florentine period painting the Madonna remained his favorite work and absorbed the greater part of his time. (3) How

(1) See Rosenberg, page 23.

(2) Catholic Encyclopedia, 1. c., page 641.

(3) Rosenberg, 1. c., page 19.

many Madonnas he painted in those days we do not know, but in all those we have of that period we can trace the progress of the painter in his art. Under Leonardo da Vinci's influence he had changed his methods. By and by he rose to a higher ideal.

While at Rome fame had come to the young painter, and a world-wide renown was his at that time. Monarchs, dukes, and princes, among them the King of France, made earnest efforts to obtain his paintings. At the same time Pope Julius II, and, after him, Leo X, as also some old aristocratic Roman families, forced so many orders on him that it was impossible for one man to satisfy them all. Like other masters, Raphael as a rule sketched the outlines of the picture, leaving it to his students to execute under his supervision the details and decorations. But even then, among so many various occupations, his delight was to paint the Madonna, and the pictures of this period remain his masterpieces. Some he finished himself without the assistance of his pupils.

All these Madonnas have many points of resemblance, and still there is in them great variety. They prove the wonderful versatility of his talent; for Raphael never repeats himself, and there is an original idea in every one of his





OXFORD DRAWING

RAPHAEL

STUDY FOR A MADONNA



Madonnas. Though the types remain the same and the folds are peculiar to him, as also the tone and the technique, the composition is always different and carefully studied. Many extant drawings enable us to trace his studies. On some the lines reproduce three or four ideas at a time, so that the master on any new order given could present the Madonna under a new aspect.

With regard to the Boston painting, one drawing described by Passavant gives us an idea of his preparatory work. There was in the collection of the sculptor Thorwaldsen a drawing of a Madonna attributed to Raphael. The cartoon is two feet high. The Virgin on it, half-figure, inclines her head a little to the right and holds the Child, who is lying across her lap, with her two hands, principally with the right one. The Infant holds His head to the Virgin's side and looks up past her. His right hand on His breast, His left foot over His extended right. (1)

This may be the original drawing of the Boston painting. But for a slight change—the left foot hidden beneath the extended right—the composition is identical. Raphael studied carefully the poses of the different figures of his Madonnas. There are many cartoons by him in which we

(1) Passavant, 1. c., II, pages 490-491.

recognize sketches of the various paintings which have come down to us.

A composition somewhat similar to the Boston painting is in the Oxford collection, with this difference that the Child has His hands on a book held up by the Mother. (1) In the museum of the Louvre there is also a drawing by Raphael, giving the same poses to the Mother and Child, with the exception that the Mother holds the book in her right hand, and the Child turns to the left towards it. His hands are folded on His breast.

Another composition resembling our painting is in the form of a medallion on a sketch for a tomb. This drawing is kept in the Chatsworth collection. (2) About this sketch Muntz speaks as follows:—"Raphael executed another work for Isabella Gonzaga, of which mention is made in a letter written by Castiglione to his patroness on the 5th of June, 1519: 'Regarding what your Excellency writes me on the subject of a tomb I think you ought to be satisfied with what Raphael has done. Monsignor Tricarico has undertaken to bring them to you. These

(1) See Muntz, page 165.

(2) The Chatsworth Raffaeles, a series of twenty auto-type reproductions of the Raffaele drawings in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire and Chatsworth, London, 1872, 20th pl.

designs seem to me suitable in every way. Michael Angelo is not in Rome and I do not know whom to go to except Raphael. I am certain his proposal will be received with favor by you.' M. Campori, to whom we owe our knowledge of this correspondence, is disposed to think that these allusions are to a tomb for Isabella's husband, who had died a few months before. Various events combined to prevent the execution of the monument." (1)

An important part of the design in this sketch belonging to the Chatsworth collection is a medallion to be placed over the grave. In this medallion is to be placed a Madonna, which in its crude outlines resembles our painting. It is quite possible that this sketch kept in the Chatsworth collection is a part of the drawings sent to the Marchioness through Mgr. Tricarico, especially as this is the only drawing of its kind we have by Raphael.

The important fact for us is this: the composition of that small sketch of a Madonna is similar to that of the picture discovered in Boston. The latter, therefore, is Raphaelesque in its composition, and, as we further know from documents that at that date, 1519, the Madonna Gonzaga was yet unfinished in Raphael's studio,

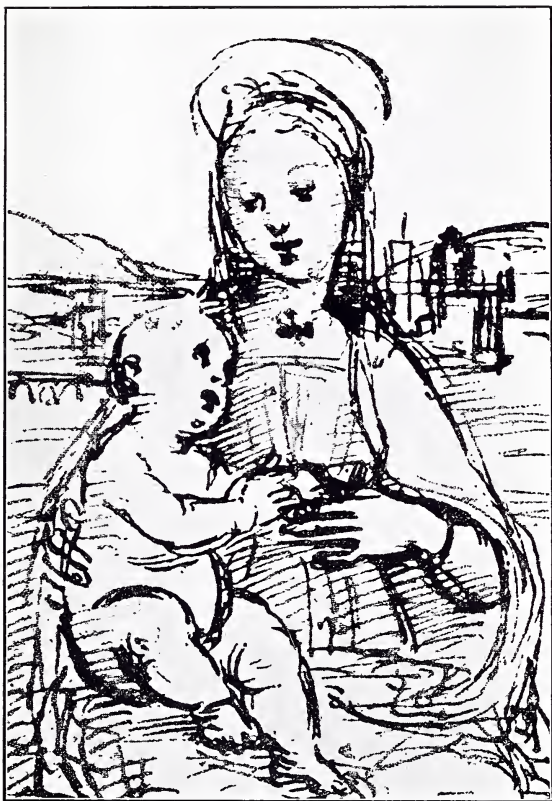
(1) Muntz, 1. c., page 599.

perhaps Sanzio expected it to be placed in the medallion over the Marquis' grave, where it would have been in quite an appropriate setting.

The composition of our picture in its entirety is Raphaelesque, for every detail is found in other works of the master, especially in his Madonnas, with the exception of the lovely pose of the Child's foot on the Virgin's forearm.

The Boston painting is the only one in which this feature occurs and it gives the painting quite an original touch. In the Madonna of the Solly collection, painted when Raphael was only nineteen years old, we find a somewhat similar pose. It is reproduced five years later in the Madonna from the House of Orleans, again in the Madonna Mackintosh painted about 1513; but in all three the Virgin holds the Child's foot in the palm of her hand, while in the Boston painting it rests lightly on her forearm.

The fact that the Child is draped gives our painting even a more original touch and an appearance very different from that of Raphael's other works. We are so accustomed to seeing the Child nude in Raphael's Madonnas that this drapery led some to question the authenticity of this painting. The fact is that this feature



MALCOLM COLLECTION

RAPHAEL

MOTHER AND CHILD





depended several times upon the patrons by whom the picture was ordered. Moreover the Child is draped in at least three other Madonnas.

In 1503, Raphael began an important work for the nuns of the Convent of San Antonio, in Perugia. (1) It had been left unfinished, when two years later the young painter returned to that city to add the Saints Peter and Paul to the picture of the Madonna which forms the principal part of the decoration of the main altar. In this Madonna the Child is draped and this, as Vasari notes, because of the Sisters' wish. "In the same city (Perugia) Raphael was commissioned to paint a picture of Our Lady by the nuns of San Antonio of Padua. The Infant Christ is in the lap of the Virgin and is fully clothed, as it pleased those simple and pious ladies that it should be."

These nuns were conforming to a custom quite common at that time in instructing Raphael regarding the character of the picture they desired, for as one writer states it is an established fact that in his time those who ordered a

(1) This Madonna is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, the gift of Mr. Pierpont Morgan. The Pieta, belonging to the same altar, is now in Mrs. J. Gardner's collection, Boston.

picture often prescribed to the artist not only the number of figures they wished to be represented, but the names also of the persons to be portrayed and sometimes the very positions they desired to be given them. (1)

This was especially true in the case of Isabella d'Este. From her correspondence with Perugino we see that she pointed out to him all the faces she wanted to be reproduced in her *Love and Chastity*. (2) Several of the best known paintings by Mantegna and Costa were entirely inspired by her.

This we may presume also of the Raphael Madonna. She probably borrowed the idea, as we shall see later on, from a Madonna belonging to her gallery. She probably wanted the Child entirely draped, the folds encircling the small body in the same manner as in her other Madonna.

As we have remarked before, we find the Child draped in other Madonnas by Raphael, for example, the *Virgin of the Chair* and the *Madonna della Tenda*. In the Chatsworth collection there exists a drawing for a Madonna ascribed to Raphael, in which the Child is stand-

(1) Musée de peinture et de sculpture, Paris, 1829 Vol. I, page 31.

(2) See Muntz, 1. c., page 43.



FLORENCE, OFFICES

RAPHAEL

PORTRAIT OF RAPHAEL BY HIMSELF



ing, fully draped in a large garment, the Mother near teaching her Child. The draping of the Child is, therefore, not so unusual with Raphael after all.

The unmistakable marks of the master's composition, however, are the types of both Mother and Child. They are the same all through Raphael's works and defy all efforts of copyists to reproduce them. In the Boston Museum of Fine Arts there are two beautiful old copies, the one from the Bridgewater, the other from the Loretto Madonnas. But how different the faces are from Raphael's types!

Grueger, referring to the Madonna della Sedia, said, "An infinity of reproductions have been made of the picture. Not one of them gives a true idea of it." The same applies to the Boston painting. Though the copies found up to the present are executed with great skill in every detail, yet all fall far behind the original. We have here the classical head of the Virgin, her ideal type, attempted so to speak by all painters, but brought out with rare perfection by Raphael alone. This type we trace through his entire work. From the day he was foreman of Perugino's studio to his last painting of the Virgin, it is identically the same, just as we find it in his cartoons also. There is in the British

Museum a fine drawing of a head of the Virgin and Child, reproduced as a frontispiece by Muntz in his voluminous work on Raphael. Those two faces present the typical features we see in all Raphael's Madonnas. Passavant already saw great similarity in those two types with those in the Madonnas by Raphael's father, Giovanni Santi.

We may suppose that this Italian painter of the Madonna often took his young wife and baby, Raphael, as models, and so the child gazed many a time on the two faces, which fixed themselves indelibly in his memory. Raphael succeeded in seeing things with his imagination as clearly as the portraitist who works from life. Also he avers that though he used models, still he never servilely copied them. His powerful genius created the expressions and other details of the figures he was to represent on canvas. He was a master in expression.

Raphael was indeed largely endowed with the power of "imparting the most exquisite expression to his faces, and the most graceful character to the heads of his pictures." (1) He could blend several sentiments so harmoniously on panel or canvas that they baffle the art of copyists. Some panels are so small that the paintings

(1) Vasari, 1. c., page 157.

look like miniatures, and the magnifying glass alone can do them full justice. So he took the type of his own mother and of himself, as he had seen them so often reproduced on canvas by his father, and gave to them various expressions. This thought is rendered beautifully by Margaret Preston in a poem entitled, "The Child Raphael." (1)

I know you have heard the story  
And gotten the name by heart,  
Of one of the grand old masters;  
They call him the "Prince of Art."

Who painted the purest pictures,  
Christs of the gentlest mien,  
And the loveliest Virgin Mother  
That ever the world has seen.

What visions suggested the graces  
That o'er his Madonnas shine  
And where could he find a baby  
To paint, that was so divine?

And whence had he skill to do it,  
And how did he come to know

(1) Mary Lovejoy, Raphael, The Prince of Art, page 127.

Better than all the Masters  
Why he should paint them so?

In an old Italian city,  
Urbino, the queer and quaint,  
There lived Giovanni Santi,  
An artist who loved to paint.

And when he had need of models,  
What models so sweet could be  
To him, as his beautiful Magia  
With her baby upon her knee

And so she was called Madonna  
For whom she so often sufficed,  
And so they called her baby  
Raphael: the Infant Christ.

And surely, a mystic radiance  
Over the boy would shine  
As he thought they deemed him worthy  
To image the Child Divine!

No wonder he walked exulting  
Through all of his happy years!  
No wonder she looked celestial  
As seen through his orphan tears!





MANTUA

OLD MANTUAN MADONNA



The memory that filled his childhood  
On his canvas left its trace,  
For each of his sweet Madonnas  
Holds hint of his mother's face.

In this painting the Mother and Child are in colloquy about heavenly things. The Child's lips are half parted and the Mother is listening. This idea of colloquy is altogether in Raphael's manner and is found in many of his best known Madonnas. Raphael pictures sentiment; it is rendered in the expression of the features, but reproduced, too, by those half parted lips which seem to utter a sound. In the *Madonna di Casa Tempi* we see the Virgin pressing the Infant to her. Her face expresses tenderness of feeling, and from her half opened mouth we seem to hear that deep sigh of affection which a mother alone can utter when close to her offspring. In the *Madonna di Casa Colonna* and in the *large Cowper Madonna*, the lips of the Child are half open and seem to utter a cry of delight. In the *Madonna di Cardinello* the little St. John presents the Infant Jesus with a goldfinch and has his mouth half open as if speaking to him. *La Belle Jardinère*, as also the one *Under the Palm Tree*, and others, present a similar colloquy. We understand what natural-

ness and life such a colloquy adds to a scene, and how it beautifies a composition.

Other similarities there are which clearly bespeak the Raphaelesque origin of this composition. The Virgin's hands present similar designs in the Bridgewater Madonna and the Virgin of the Colonna family, Berlin. The Child's small foot that appears from under the garment can be traced, so to say, through all his Madonnas. So also is the fold on the Child's right arm peculiar to Raphael and very common in his later works. The Virgin's veil and draperies, the right knee coming out so distinctly, the very colors, red, green and blue, can be traced in most of his paintings.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY. (B) RAPHAEL'S TECHNIQUE.

Other proofs there are which strengthen our belief that the Boston picture is by the divine Sanzio, his technique, namely, and his signatures.

Raphael took such elaborate care in painting either on panel or on canvas that he seems only to begin where other masters even of the Italian and Flemish schools would have stopped their work. Thus he effected that marvelous blending of colors which is so much admired, those natural flesh tints in which life seems to pulsate. Some authors prefer Titian and Correggio to him as colorists. The fact is, that with Raphael coloring is never the end, but the means to the end. He wants to tell us a story, to represent a scene, to give flesh and blood to some idea. He is reason itself, the most classical of all painters. But when coloring is to bring out his full idea, he is the greatest of colorists. Never did any one give those flesh tints, that roseate hue which is

so lifelike. This delicacy of touch is peculiar to Raphael and at once impresses the art student who contemplates one of his paintings.

Those who have admired his works abroad recognize at once in the Boston painting one of his most important works. Already, Raphael Mengs, who gazed on the picture while it was in the Escorial, in Madrid, expresses himself about it in words of the highest praise: "La testa della Madonna in particolare e tutta sua, ed e pieno di vita e d'espressione. E' finalmente parragonabile cun qualecumque altra delle sue migliori Opere." (1)

The colors are nearly as fresh as on the day Raphael put the finishing touches to the painting. This feature comes from the fact that the laying on of pigment took from four to five years, as we shall see later when giving the history of the painting, one coat being thoroughly dry before new pigment was added to it. Certain visitors at the studio, who may pass for experts regarding pigment, saw in the translucent white garments of the Child, in the blue tints of the Virgin's mantle, a perfection of coloring identical with that of the Sistine Madonna in Dresden, and the Virgin of the Chair in Florence. Red green and blue, and a white peculiar to Raphael,

(1) Opera di Antonio Raffaello Mengs, 1. c., page 175.



FLORENCE, PITTI GALLERY  
MADONNA DELLA SEDIA

RAPHAEL





are the colors which reappear in his Madonnas; so, also, in the Boston painting.

Even the way in which a master's colors are cracking has been pointed out as a proof of authenticity for this picture. In Raphael's time, at the height of the Renaissance period, the art of painting reached its climax, and never was similar care taken in preparing a canvas or panel and in pounding and mixing the colors; never did artists spend so much time on the same picture. It took Leonardo da Vinci four years to paint his Mona Lisa. This explains how a number of paintings dating from that period keep the brilliancy of the day on which the masters made the finishing touches.

Experts tell us that the paintings of the same master present similar processes of contraction of the colors. After four hundred years those marks of deterioration are hardly noticeable on most paintings of the Renaissance period. The art of photography reveals them, or a powerful magnifying glass. The colors being the same, laid on in the same way, the same brushwork, through some kind of chemical process, after a number of years present the same mode of cracking. The Boston painting, enlarged by photography, is said to present the same mode of cracking as other works by Raphael.

a prominent form, with such science that with four strokes of the brush he would give the promise of a beautiful figure.' These 'precious foundations' being laid in would be turned to the wall, and left there often for some months without his ever looking at them. They would then be brought out one by one and subjected to the most rigorous scrutiny, 'as if they were the face of his most mortal enemy.' Where any defect or redundancy appeared, he would deal with the case like skillful surgeon—pruning away excrescences, resetting an arm, twisting a foot round into its proper place, regardless of pain to the patient. This would then be put aside to dry and another canvas would pass under the knife, till 'little by little he would have covered with real living flesh these first brief abstracts of his intention.' When it came to 'delicate flavorings' in the shape of retouches, he would go over the work here with a dab of the thumb in the high lights (which he would thus model off into the half tints), and there with a simple streak of the finger that dashed a spot of dark into some corner to heighten the effect, or else some blood-drop of crimson to vivify a surface. 'In this way he would go on and on, bringing up gradually to perfection his lifelike figures . . . and in the finishing

process he really painted more with his finger than with the brush.' (1)

"Here we have no careful preparation with crayon work, but a thick impasto, over which the pigment is extended. Raphael certainly never uses his finger to put the finishing touches, but he passes from one tint to another so carefully that we hardly notice in what direction the brush goes. This can be said of Correggio, too. His coloring is smooth and careful, though his process is again altogether different from that of Raphael. Sir Charles Eastlake remarks that Correggio 'began his flesh color on a comparatively colorless, and sometimes even cold scale, as compared with the glow of his finished works.' " The shading of his flesh work is not laid in beforehand with crayon work, but he uses "a transparent rubbing of gray over pearly flesh." It "conveys exactly the impression of a shade superimposed on the skin, which retains its potential brightness below." (2)

As certain copyists, with the carelessness proper to their time, attribute the original to Murillo, let us here correct their error. Haquin is authority again that Murillo followed in his

(1) *The Fine Arts*, by G. Baldwin Brown, New York, 1891, page 312.

(2) *Ib.* page 311.

technique the Spanish manner of preparing the canvas, and of painting: "Mr. Haquin observed that Murillo and Velasquez have painted their pictures upon the red, earthy preparations with which the Spanish canvas has almost uniformly been charged, and which hides their first process." (1)

We can plainly see the painter's first process on the Boston painting. There is nothing of a red, earthy preparation visible on it, but it is Raphael's mode of coating the canvas, as the bits covering the straining boards plainly show. From the point of view of the technique peculiar to each one of the two masters, the Boston Madonna has to be attributed to Raphael. So also with regard to the canvas itself. The Spanish canvas used was rather coarse. Raphael has relatively few paintings executed on canvas, he used mostly wood for his easel paintings. But for this Madonna, as we shall later see in our history of the painting, Isabella d'Este sent a special envoy from Mantua to Rome with certain instructions, and with the very canvas on which she wished the Madonna to be painted.

If we now compare the composition with that of Murillo's we find that the Spanish painter's conception of the Virgin was altogether dif-

(1) *Ib.* page 343.

ferent from that of the Urbinate. He likes to represent Mary carried on heavenly clouds, surrounded by angels, her eyes lifted towards heaven; while in Raphael's Madonnas the Virgin is always represented with downcast eyes. Kugler (1) calls our attention to the fact that Murillo has two ways of representing the Madonna—either she is carried on clouds, her eyes raised to heaven, surrounded by angels; or, with the Child on her lap, of quite domestic character, the Child full of the joy of life. In both cases the Madonna represents a portrait face, copied from a model; not an ideal conception, as Raphael paints her. Kugler mentions one exception, "the famous Madonna Leuchtenberg; the expression of the Madonna is lovely and full of devotion, while the Child is draped and in prayer."

This "one exception," the Madonna Leuchtenberg, as we shall see later on, is precisely a copy of the Boston painting, in Kugler's time still attributed to Murillo, but now no longer ascribed to the Spanish painter.

So we see how different the composition is from that of Raphael. In coloring, too, there is all the difference in the world, as also in the folds. Besides, as we shall now see, the date, inter-

(1) Kugler, *Handbuch der Geschichte der Malerei*, vol. iii, page 116.

woven in the Virgin's veil when the painting was delivered, is 1520, and Murillo was born in 1617.



FLORENCE, PITTI GALLERY

RAPHAEL

MADONNA DEL GRANDUCA





## CHAPTER V.

### PROOFS OF AUTHENTICITY. (C) SIGNATURES.

There are yet other indications which point directly to Raphael as author of this painting, viz., the different signatures. "It was not customary with the old masters to sign their paintings. The appreciation of their contemporaries was all they desired. Art and masters were highly considered in those days. Few, therefore, signed their paintings, especially in Germany and the Netherlands. In Italy, on the contrary, during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period, signatures were more frequent. During the fifteenth century some engravers began to sign their works with their initials or with a monogram. At the end of the fifteenth century this custom was prevalent everywhere, among painters and draftsmen. This monogram was composed of the initials of the name and birth-place interwoven into one sign. During the seventeenth century the painters adopted universally the custom of signing their works with their full name." (1)

(1) Nagler, *Monogrammisten*, vol. i, page 3, Munich, 1858.

Raphael, too, used monograms. According to Ris-Paquot, (1) his own initials—"R. S." (Raphael Santi) with that of his birthplace, "U" (Urbinas)—are found interwoven in signs of different forms. Such signs exist on a great number of his paintings, but until lately had been overlooked by most authors. If discovered on pictures whose origin by Raphael is contested, they form a strong proof of authenticity. Raphael always inscribed his monogram on a conspicuous part of the painting; in portraits, mostly on the headgear.

There are several portraits of Pope Julius II extant, of which two are well known. They were exhibited respectively in the Pitti gallery and in that of the Offices in Florence. "As for the original, it is certain, at least to connoisseurs, that it is in the Pitti; in both drawing and modeling it is superior to any of its rivals." This judgment by Passavant was universally received as the correct one for a number of years, from 1840 to 1880. Then some connoisseurs thought the one of the Offices might be the original by Raphael. Muntz, comparing the opinion of critics to the fluctuations of fashion, points out here the fallacy of *expertise*. If

(1) Dictionnaire encyclopédiques des marques et monogrammes, 9181-9183.

we examine both portraits closely, we find some folds in the headgear of the portrait belonging to the Pitti gallery, Raphael's monogram, while they do not exist on the other picture. So, after all, Passavant's opinion was most probably the correct one.

The same remark can be made with regard to the portrait of Cardinal Inghirami. Two specimens of the portrait of this Roman dignitary exist, one in the gallery of the Offices in Florence, the other in Mrs. Gardner's Collection, Boston. At one time the painting in Florence was supposed to be the original by Raphael, while the other was looked upon as a copy. Here, however, the critics again reversed their judgment, and now pronounce the painting in the Boston Collection to be by Raphael, while the one in Florence is supposed to be the copy. Indeed, if we examine both, we find the same sort of monogram in the headgear of the Cardinal in Mrs. Gardner's painting, while it is lacking in the Florence portrait.

On the Boston Madonna there is a monogram giving the three letters "R. S. U." on the Virgin's garments, close to the Child's hands. It can be noticed even on small photographs of the painting. It is crayon work covered with pigment. The copyists noticed these folds and

rendered them in a way which shows their utter ignorance of their significance. These folds, indeed, mean nothing less than that they are a monogram by which Raphael signed the painting as his own work.

Raphael had a second way of signing his paintings, viz., his full name, "RAPHAEL URBINAS." Such is the case with the large Madonna painted in 1518 for Francis I, a school work in which Dollmayr finds the combined work of Penni and Giulio Romano. We read on it in full letters the inscription "RAPHAEL URBINAS PINGEBAT, MDXVIII." The same signature is on his "St. Michael Slaying the Dragon," dating from the same time.

This signature seems to exist on the Boston painting, too. In large negatives taken of a part of the Virgin's veil some letters appear, "RA" and "U", the same Latin letters he used on other inscriptions, written with black crayon on the composition covering the canvas, and hidden entirely under the pigment. If the painting is ever transferred to other canvas, the expert who will do the work probably will read Raphael's name in full.

Suppose the painting to be a copy or a fraud, would the copyist have thus hidden the name under the pigment, or would he not rather

have inscribed it in a conspicuous part of the painting?

A third signature peculiar to Raphael was the date on which the painting was ready for delivery. These figures are found on the edge of a shield, on the hem of a garment, and do not easily draw the attention of the beholder.

In the Friedrich Museum, in Berlin, there is a Madonna by Raphael, known under the name of "Madonna della Casa Colonna," bought in 1827 from the family Sante. It is looked upon as an unfinished work of the great master; still the date 1507 is written on the hem of the Virgin's garment. The "Madonna Ansidei," so called from John Ansidei who ordered the painting from Raphael, and now kept in the National Gallery, London, is dated 1505. The large "Madonna Cowper" is signed 1508, the "Belle Jardinière," 1507, etc.

The Boston Madonna is marked 1520, in the lower part of the Virgin's veil. Those figures also are written in black crayon and covered with a fine glaze; they are so interwoven with the veil that they seem to be simply shadings. This date marks our Madonna as the last work of the divine Sanzio, who died that same year, 1520, in the beginning of April. It is, no doubt, that Madonna which Balthazare Castiglione took

to Mantua at the end of 1520: "un quadro d'una nostra donna di man di Raffaello," as we shall see later on. This Madonna never has been identified. The Transfiguration and the Boston Madonna thus share the honor of being the last paintings by the divine Sanzio, "le chant du cygne," if we may use this expression of the most powerful genius that ever appeared in the annals of art.

The visitor who has passed some time before this painting absorbing its beauties, and afterwards passes through galleries where paintings from the brushes of other masters both ancient and modern are on exhibition, will be sure to return with the conviction that this painting surpasses in beauty all those he has seen.

A picture of the Madonna, attributed to Luini, which was acquired in the Lambert sale a few months ago by the Brooklyn Institute of Fine Arts, has attracted much attention, and deservedly so, for it is undoubtedly the gem of the Museum. Yet this picture does not create so great an impression as does the Madonna Gonzaga. Its reputed author is not inaptly called the "Raphael of Lombardy."

On entering the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts in New York, our gaze at once rests upon a painting of the Madonna exhibited above

the landing of the large staircase leading up to the gallery of paintings. It is the famous Madonna of the Colonna family mentioned above and presented to the Museum through the munificence of Mr. Pierpont Morgan. It belongs to the Umbrian time of Raphael and is therefore one of his early works and of undoubted authenticity. The one who first makes a careful study of the Madonna Gonzaga and then scrutinizes the Madonna Colonna, can trace the progress of the master during the last fifteen years of his life,—from the day he returned from Florence to Perugia to add the two figures of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, to that moment when struck down with a fever, he dropped his brush never to take it up again. The expressions of the Madonna Gonzaga are far superior to those in the New York painting. The blending of colors is softer, particularly of the flesh tints, and the draftsmanship finer; the pencil marks are more regular, the tone is brighter and the poses are more natural. In fine, the comparison between the two paintings discloses the same master strokes, the same coloring and technique, and demonstrates the progress Raphael made in the years which intervened between the Umbrian and Roman periods of his career. Indeed one who is a fre-

quent beholder of the Madonna Gonzaga experiences a certain disappointment when seeing the Madonna Colonna. And yet, beyond doubt both pictures contain the same types.

These two types in the Madonna Gonzaga are Raphaelesque and can be traced through the forty and some odd paintings of the Madonna which are either his own productions or belong to the school he inaugurated, and through a still greater number of drawings, which are studies for the same paintings. To enter into detail, the Virgin, has for instance, her eyes cast down, a feature common in Perugino's school but more common still in Raphael's paintings. She has uncommonly large hands, another feature in which the pupil imitated his master and finally she has the heavy eyelid, "which is a characteristic of the Madonnas of Raffaele—the 'santo, onesto e grave ciglio' (the holy, honest and sad eyelids!)" (1)

In many Madonnas by Raphael the arch over the eyelid is hardly visible. According to Castiglione's *Cortegiano* it was customary with Italian ladies of his time to remove the hair of their eyebrows and foreheads. In the Madonna Gonzaga the arches over the Virgin's eyes are very slight and scarcely visible. Let it be also

(1) The paintings of Florence, by Karl Karoly, page 78.



noted here, that in his four last Madonnas the head of the Virgin is turned to the same side as in the Madonna Gonzaga.

The pose of the Child in the Mother's arms can be followed through several paintings, the Child's foot coming near the Mother's hand till in this last Madonna of his, it rests lightly upon her wrist. That is about the only original feature of the painting, all other details of the composition being found in the previous work of Sanzio.

Both the Child's hands and His one visible foot are designed with the greatest care and they have the same kind of lines as those that appear in the Child of his later Madonnas.

The Virgin's hands are so to say identically the same as on other Madonnas though a little out of proportion, reminding us of the school where Raphael received his training. The Child's hair is parted in the middle as we find it on most of his children's heads. Thus we find the same arrangement in the Madonna della Tenda, the Madonna Aldobrandini, the small Cowper or Panshanger Madonna now in Philadelphia. Let us note too that the hair is arranged with greater care than on any of his other paintings, thus imparting special beauty to the Madonna Gonzaga.

The idea of colloquy is brought out in Raphael's scenes and constitute with the gestures and poses the action of the composition. In the Madonna Gonzaga the action is quiet and the idea of colloquy is indicated by the parted lips of the Child and the listening attitude of the Mother.

The work on this painting was begun at the time Raphael had started two similar compositions, the Madonna of the Chair and the Madonna della Tenda. In all three, we find the same poses, the same oval of light, though less perfect on the two latter works, the same three rays of light beaming from behind the Child's head.

In the Madonna Gonzaga the veil is transparent, covering, but not concealing the hair and part of the forehead; which is the case also with regard to the Madonna della Tenda, the Madonna del Granduca, the Madonna of the House of Orleans and the Madonna under the Palm Tree.

The garments in the Madonna Gonzaga are painted in the colors we meet so frequently in both Raphael's frescoes and paintings, red, blue, green and white, symbolizing the four elements. Those four colors give to the painting the tone we expect to find in important works of his. Raphaelesque above all is the

marvelous blending of the flesh tints peculiar to the great master. The Virgin's head is painted with the greatest of care, in the softest of tones. It is we would like to say, Raphael's masterpiece.

If Giulio Romano gives too much prominence to the red color in rendering a complexion, and his brush work is irregular, the same cannot be said of his master. The one who scrutinized other works by Raphael and is familiar with his tones, in presence of the Madonna Gonzaga at once recognizes the soft blending tones peculiar to the great Renaissance painter.

The folds on the garment of this painting bear testimony to its Raphaelesque origin. They are the same garments, with the identical colors and folds, as we find in the other paintings of the Madonna by the divine Sanzio. Here we have the blue mantle of the Madonna Ansidei, of the Madonna del Cardinello, of the Bridgewater Madonna, of the "Belle Jardinière," of the Madonna da Foligno, of the Madonna della Tenda, of the Sistine, of the Madonna di Casa Tempi, the Madonna Terranuova and of the Madonna di Casa Colonna, etc. In all the paintings just mentioned the blue mantle covers a red garment as in the Madonna Gonzaga. Thus we find the same blue mantle covering

the left shoulder in the Madonna della Tenda, in the Madonna Terranuova, in the Bridgewater Madonna, with this difference, that in the Madonna Gonzaga the blue mantle is gracefully lined with green. In the Madonna del Cardinello, the "Belle Jardinière," the Madonna di Casa Colonna the blue mantle covers the right shoulder, while in the Madonna Gonzaga it covers both shoulders the right being hidden behind the Child. In the Madonna di Casa Colonna, of the Goldfinch and the Bridgewater Madonna, a bit of red appears in graceful folds over the Virgin's wrist, as in the Madonna Gonzaga.

The folds are important in identifying a painting: The same master reproduces again and again the same planes. Ribera's folds are triangular, showing many acute and obtuse angles. Raphael has often the rectangular plane, two parallel folds crossed by a third one at right angles. This feature is twice seen on the Virgin's left arm in the Madonna Gonzaga, on the blue mantle just below the green lining. That same fold is seen on St. Elizabeth's arm in the "Small Holy Family" of the Louvre, again on St. Elizabeth's arm in the Visitation of the Prado, on St. Peter's arm in the cartoon, "The Healing of the Lame Man;" on St. Peter in the cartoon, "The Charge to Peter."



DRESDEN

RAPHAEL

ST. BARBARA

DETAIL FROM SISTINE MADONNA



Sometimes two parallel folds meet two other parallels, thus forming a nearly regular geometrical figure with right or obtuse and acute angles. Such a formation is found on the arm of the Virgin in the Madonna Gonzaga, as also on the arm of the Virgin in the Madonna with the Chandeliers. A notable instance of the figure is seen on Tobias's garment, to the left of the angel's right hand in the Madonna with the Fish; it is similar to the one in the Madonna Gonzaga just mentioned.

The critic sees in the folds indubitable traces of Raphael's progress in his art. In his first attempts they are stiff and metallic, like those of his master Perugino or, his rival and bitter enemy, Sebastian del Piombo. In his earlier paintings of the Madonna, the sleeve fits tight on the arm and therefore shows few folds; later on he enlarges it and it encircles the wrist in beautifully folded draperies. There is one fold he reproduces, again and again, in his later work. It is the one on the Child's arm in the Madonna Gonzaga. The sleeve is turned back and folded into irregular formations, presenting a most diversified aspect. Thus we find it in the Sistine on St. Barbara, in the Madonna della Sedia on the left arm of the Child; again twice on the figure of our Lord in the Transfiguration, on

three more figures of the same painting, on all representations of the Creator in the Loggia of the Vatican, also in the cartoons, in one word in many works of his Roman period. That graceful fold in the Madonna Gonzaga is again an additional proof that our painting is one of his latest productions.

Raphael took painstaking care in the drawing of his folds; they are both natural and graceful and are without parallel in the works of other painters. In his drawings he represents the same figure in various poses to find out which attitude would give him the most beautiful folds. He allows the large planes of the body to be suggested by the folds. Murillo's folds are heavy, and show that they were designed to fill up space, with no regard to the anatomy of the body while Raphael's folds are true to anatomical structure. All his Madonnas have one point in common; the outstanding knee with the same folds; we notice this feature in the Madonna Gonzaga as in all those paintings of the Madonna in which the Virgin is in a sitting position. Peculiar to his Roman period, we might say, are the rich folds over the Virgin's forearms, as we see them in the Madonna Gonzaga; the folds on her right forearm bear a close resemblance to those



of St. Margaret which was painted about 1518; the folds on her left forearm are frequently repeated in Raphael's work.

It is these minute details which furnish a key to the productions of the Roman period, the technique of the painting is the one which he followed throughout. Although the literature on Sanzio is very rich, the best authors give few or no details on his technique. If his technique were better known, there would be little difficulty in distinguishing his originals from copies of them by other masters. There are portraits and Madonnas by him existing in so called replicas. Which is the original? Which the copy? *Adhuc sub judice lis est.*

The most reliable authorities on Raphael's technique are those experts who transferred paintings of his from panel on canvas. That happened subsequently to the French Revolution at which time a number of works by Sanzio had been brought to Paris from different countries. They made, so to say, an autopsy of Raphael's paintings, planing off the wood, removing the coating which covered the panels. They had then, under their very eyes, the first work of the painting which consisted in drawing the outlines and putting in most of the shades with black crayon before the pigment was laid on. They discovered cor-

rections made by Raphael while developing his painting. Thus, according to their testimony, the arms of the angel shedding flowers in the large Madonna of Francis I, were raised to a higher level, the design thus showing two pairs of arms.

In the Madonna Gonzaga we find the technique of Raphael as described by these authorities. Pencil marks can be seen with the naked eye in many places; for instance between the Child's fingers, around his eyes, and in the oval of the Virgin's face. Although this painting is on canvas, Raphael follows up here his technique as in other paintings. Few of his productions are on canvas; the St. John in Florence, the Sistine and the Madonna Gonzaga. Vasari's statement that the Sistine was on panel cannot be accepted. That the Madonna Gonzaga was painted on canvas we know from a letter by Isabella d'Este, which is still extant.

The argument drawn from Raphael's technique is very strong. Suppose the painting in question to be of later date, it would not have those pencil marks under the pigment. We know of no later painter who used identically the technique of Raphael, neither do we know of any who succeeded in rendering the flesh tints as Raphael did. His simple colors, blue, green and this translucent white of the Child's garment

are peculiar to him. Suppose the painting to be an imitation of Raphael's style, the imitator would have surpassed Raphael himself in Raphael's strongest points. Would the imitator have concealed thus cleverly a fictitious date, 1520, which escaped the attention of all copyists, and which is marked in the manner Raphael signed his dates? Would he have imitated Raphael's monogram, as we find it in other paintings of his, a sign which till now has been overlooked?

The technical proofs are corroborated by historical argument. We can show that the last painting of the Madonna by Raphael was commissioned by Isabella d'Este and brought to Mantua after Raphael's death. That painting has never been identified. We can trace its history till it lands with other art treasures on the shores of America, where it disappears. Indeed there are few paintings by Raphael about which there are so many documents extant, disclosing the origin and history of the painting. The Boston painting has all those peculiarities which characterize the Madonna Gonzaga. There are moreover indications as we follow up the history of the painting, that the Madonna Gonzaga and the Boston painting are identically one and the same painting.

## CHAPTER VI.

### HISTORY OF THE MADONNA GONZAGA: THE PAINTING IN ROME.

Coming now to the history of the Boston painting, we wish to state that it would be an interesting study to note the political upheavals which caused famous paintings to pass from hand to hand. Political events are far-reaching in the domain of art. The disturbances they create can be measured by the number of paintings which change ownership at the time they occur. Take, for instance, the Revolution in England. Not only did the unfortunate Charles I lose his life, but his collection of paintings, the choicest the world's history knows, was scattered to the four winds. The French Revolution, and, in its wake, the wars under Napoleon, caused the masterpieces of art to be dragged from one country to another, some of them to be destroyed and others in great number lost.

If we now consider that many such changes have been brought about in the four centuries which separate us from Raphael, it is easy to understand that it is well nigh impossible to trace all of his pictures from one place to another.



BOSTON, MRS. GARDNER'S COLLECTION

POLIDORO

ISABELLA D'ESTE



Unless their wanderings were few, as were those of the Sistine Madonna bought by the Elector of Saxony from the very monks by whom the painting had been ordered, or the Madonna da Foligno shipped to Paris in 1798, and back to Italy in 1815, or the "Madonna di Terranuova," which remained in the same family up to the time when the Friedrich Museum of Berlin bought it, most of his best known works disappear and reappear throughout the ages, and we are unable to obtain a connected history of their changes.

The Boston painting on the contrary is of such importance, even when compared to other works by the divine Sanzio, that documents have been found which disclose its transfer from one country to another, so that it is a relatively easy matter to trace its history.

It was painted for Isabella d'Este. All authors recognize her as the greatest lady of the Renaissance. There has seldom appeared in history a woman with as high intellectual and moral gifts. "During forty years," writes Julia Cartwright, "she played an important part in the history of her times, and made the little court of Mantua famous in the eyes of the whole civilized world. The wisdom and sagacity which she showed in political affairs commanded universal

respect. During the lifetime both of her husband and son, she was repeatedly called upon to administer the government of the state, and showed a coolness and dexterity in the conduct of the most difficult negotiations that would have excited the admiration of Machiavelli himself. By her skillful diplomacy this able woman saved the little state of Mantua from falling a prey to the ambitious designs of Caesar Borgia, or the vengeance of two powerful monarchs, Louis XII and Francis I." (1) She thus gave such stability to the throne of Mantua that the family of the Gonzagas occupied it for four centuries.

Isabella's education had been an excellent one, and she proved to be the most accomplished lady at that time of high intellectual culture. She had entered so much into the Humanist movement of the day that she found her delight in reading the Latin authors in the original text. A hall recently decorated with Mantegna's pictures of the Triumph of Caesar served as a theater in her palace. Here, (1501) the "Adelphi" of Terence and the comedies of Plautus were played. Greek she had never learned, but she read those authors in the Latin translation.

It was the period of great discoveries. Chris-

(1) *Isabella d'Este*, by Julia Cartwright, Pref., pages vii-viii.



topher Columbus had aroused Europe by his repeated trips to the newly discovered continent. Changes had to be made in the map of the world. "Isabella's correspondence shows the keen interest she took in the work of the hardy explorers who roamed the sea, and at Marmirola, a country house of hers, she had a hall in which a 'Mappemunda' was drawn in charcoal," one of the first maps on which the outlines of America were seen. (1)

Her correspondence is voluminous. There are in the archives of the Gonzaga family more than two thousand letters written by her. Those she sent to her husband rival in affectionate sentiment and expressions of deep respect the letters of Queen Louise of Prussia to her royal consort. She was an accomplished musician and the queen of fashion of the day.

Deeply religious, Isabella was an intimate friend of the Dominican Nun, Osanna Andreasi, who is said to have died in Mantua marked with the stigmata of our Lord. Isabella erected a monument in marble over her tomb in the church of St. Dominic and had her picture painted by Bonsignori. Three ladies of her court and Isabella herself are represented in religious garb, kneeling at the feet of the saintly nun.

(1) Julia Cartwright, 1. c.

It is above all as a patroness of art and letters that Isabella d'Este will be remembered. In this respect she deserves a place with the most enlightened monarchs of the Renaissance period. It was the golden age in the history of art when, so to say, every city of importance in the Italian peninsula was the seat of an independent dynasty; when all the great rivalled one another in showering favors on famous painters, in drawing them to their court and giving them opportunities to found schools of their own, to work out new ideas; while in this artists were encouraged by royal munificence and by visits of king or emperor to their studios. Charles V himself is said to have visited Titian in his studio on his memorable trip to Italy.

Isabella like all true connoisseurs had herself learned the art of drawing and traced on paper the figures she wanted to have represented in jewelry. "She combined a passionate love of beauty and the most profound reverence for antiquity, with the finest critical taste. Her studios and villas were adorned with the best paintings and statues of the first masters of the day and with the rarest antiques from the Eternal City and the Isles of Greece.

"Everything she possessed must be of the best and she was satisfied with nothing short of

perfection. Even Mantegna and Perugino sometimes failed to please her. She wrote endless letters and gave the artists in her employment the most elaborate and minute instructions. Braghirolli counted as many as forty letters on the subject of a single picture painted by Giovanni Bellini and no less than fifty-three on a painting entrusted to Perugino.

"The works of Mantegna and Costa, of Giovanni Bellini and Michael Angelo, of Perugino and Correggio (and, we may add, at least one Raphael) adorned her rooms. Giovanni Santi, Andrea Mantegna, Francisco Francia and Lorenzo Costa, all in turn painted portraits of her, which alas! perished. But her beautiful features still live in Leonardo's perfect drawing, in Christoforo's medal and in Titian's great picture at Vienna." (1)

If Titian painted Isabella from a portrait dating from her youth, Polidoro Caldara, (2) a pupil of the divine Sanzio, left us a portrait of her in her mature age. This painting is now in Mrs. Gardner's gallery, Boston. Those fine features reveal strong intellectuality and a

(1) Isabella d'Este, by Julia Cartwright, 1. c., pages viii-ix.

(2) Morelli has his doubts about the existence of a master by that name. See *Die Werke italicniescher Meister*, page 250, note.

profound artistic taste. The shrewd, critical look tells us what a fine judge of persons and things she was. She had a deep mind, and she was "a fastidious and, at times, a severe critic." The artists who were honored with orders from her had to give the best of their talent to come up to her expectations. No wonder that her gallery was looked upon as containing the finest pictures in the world.

"Nor were poets and prose writers remiss in paying her their homage. Paolo Giovio addressed her as the rarest of women; Bembo and Trissino celebrated her charms and virtues in their sonnets and canzoni. Castiglione gave her a high place in his courtly record, Ariosto paid her a magnificent tribute in his 'Orlando,' while endless were the songs and lays which minor bards offered at the shrine of this peerless Marchesa, whom they justly called the foremost lady in the world:—'*la prima donna del mondo*,' 'Isabella d'Este,' writes Jacobo Caviceo, 'at the sound of whose name all the Muses rise and do reverence.'

Such was the eminent lady for whom our Madonna was painted. Being an ardent lover of art as well as a shrewd critic, she would quite naturally desire to have a painting from the one

Isabella d'Este, by Julia Cartwright, l. c. pages ix-x.

whose name was on all lips as the prince of painters, preferably one of those Madonnas for which above all he was famous. But it should not be a work coming from the workshop, but a painting by his own hands.

When did Isabella meet Raphael for the first time? His father, Giovanni Santi, had come to Mantua in 1493 to paint a portrait of the young Marchioness. Mantegna had won fame by his compositions representing the Triumph of Caesar. The young Isabella d'Este wanted to send a portrait of herself to Isabella del Balzo, Countess of Acerra, a new acquaintance of hers through the marriage of Gianfrancesco Gonzaga to Antonia del Balzo, a sister of the countess. She entrusted the painting of it to Mantegna, but his work did not come up to the expectation of the young Marchesa. "We are much vexed," she writes on the twelfth of April, "that we are unable to send you our portrait, because the painter has done it so badly that it does not resemble us in the very least. But we have sent for a foreign artist who has the reputation of taking excellent likenesses, and as soon as it is ready we will send it to your Highness."

The artist referred to was Giovanni Santi, known to her through her sister-in-law, the new Duchess of Urbino. He came to Mantua, but

fell sick with a fever and returned to Urbino, from which place the portrait in question was delivered a few months later.

Did the young Raphael who was at the time ten years old, accompany his father to the court of Mantua? Probably not. The young boy had lost his mother at the age of eight years; his father was remarried, and the stepmother, under the watchful eye of his uncle, the priest Dom Bartolomeo, took care of the promising infant. We may therefore admit that the Marchesa met Raphael for the first time on her visit to Rome, in 1513.

"Isabella certainly met the great master, who was then at the height of his fame and recently had been appointed architect of St. Peter's by the Pope. And as he talked with her of the old days of Urbino, of his father, who had painted her portrait, and of his first patrons, the good Duke and Duchess, she begged him with a charming smile to paint a little Madonna for her whenever he had a few spare moments. Of course Raphael, who was a '*gentilezza stessa*,' promised gladly, and then went back to his frescoes and buildings and his plans of ancient Rome, and forgot all about the Marchesa and her picture." (1)

(1) *Ib.* vol. ii, page 112.

This is not quite so. We have reasons to assert that this order was not given in such a desultory fashion. She told him, as was her custom, how she wanted the painting to be done. In her collection she had a few paintings of the Madonna which show how she liked the Mother and Child to be represented. They resemble in their pose and draperies the Boston painting very much, especially one, ordered in 1481 from an artist who did not sign his painting. It is the number "30" of the catalogue drawn up in 1627 of the Mantua paintings, and is inscribed as "*Pittura rappresentante Nostra Donna e San Leonardo eseguita da artefice ignoto.*"

We know of no old picture coming so near our Madonna as this beautiful composition. The Mother holds the Child in her arms as in the Boston painting. The Infant turning towards her puts his two hands affectionately on the Mother's cheeks. He is all draped and the folds resemble those of the Boston painting. This was perhaps an inspiration for Isabella. She wanted a similar Madonna by the great master with the Child all draped; but the rather familiar pose could be rendered differently in Raphael's favorite manner—the Child in colloquy with the Mother. Thus, it is probably due to Isabella d'Este that we possess from the great Raphael

a Madonna which looks so different from his other compositions.

Raphael was eager to accept the idea of the Marchesa. He was not only the most accommodating of artists towards his patrons, but also the most assimilative of all the painters we find in the history of art. Nobody ever succeeded so well in making his own the qualities discovered in others. Vasari says that he had agents throughout Italy to send him drawings of compositions by other artists. "So comprehensive and extended were the views of Raphael in all things relating to his works, that he kept designers employed in all parts of Italy, at Puzzuolo and even in Greece, to the end that he might want nothing of that which appertained to his art, and for this he spared neither labor nor cost." (1) To this power of assimilation is due his progress during his Florentine period after he had been in touch with Leonardo da Vinci's work. From him he learned to give his Madonnas and his Infants the mysterious smile of the Mona Lisa. In Rome a glance at Michael Angelo's work in the Sistine opened a new horizon to his art. Wherever he found a new idea he made it his own.

The Marchesa did not forget the master's

(1) Vasari, 1. c., page 193.



promise. She knew well that kings and emperors considered it a favor to obtain a painting from the great master, and she determined to insist until she realized her wish, and had her Madonna safe in her apartments. She had friends in Rome, frequent visitors at Raphael's studio, and these she charged to remind him continually of his promise.

In this connection we have to mention the courtier Castiglione, a gentleman well versed in diplomacy and literature, and a lover of art. He was a warm friend of the Urbinate, and was, moreover, related to the Gonzagas of Mantua, in which city he had a palace. "Castiglione was not only one of the greatest poets of his age, but he was a very good judge in matters of art. His influence on Raphael, whose genius he was one of the first to discover, was very great, and there can be no doubt that he often pointed out to him subjects which it would be worth his while to treat." (1)

Then there was Agostino Gonzaga, a relation of Isabella, residing in Rome. He could be, so to say, in daily touch with Raphael, and, moreover, he corresponded with Isabella even to her last days.

After her return to Mantua she begged Agostino Gonzaga to remind the master of his promise.

(1) Muntz, page 282.

In June, 1515, Agostino replied that he had spoken to Raphael, who promised to begin the work shortly. But knowing by experience how vain these assurances often proved, the Marchesa thought it well to ask Castiglione's help. Accordingly, when the Count came to Mantua that summer, she begged him to use his influence with Raphael on her behalf, and on the eighth of November he wrote from Urbino to tell her of his efforts in this direction.

"When I left Mantua, your Excellency desired me to induce Raphael to paint your picture. So I wrote to him directly I reached Urbino, and he replied that he would gladly satisfy your wish. After that I went to Rome and entreated him so earnestly that he promised to put aside all his other works to work for your Highness. Now he asks me to send the measurements of the picture and the particulars of the lighting, so that he may set to work without delay. So, if your Excellency will send me these I will see to the rest and only await your orders."

Isabella replied in the following letter:—

"Dearest and magnificent Knight,—I have not answered your letter of the eighth before, as I was awaiting a trusted messenger. Now I send my horseman and thank you warmly for your kind offices with Raphael of Urbino and for

persuading him to gratify my wish. And for further execution of this kind service, I send you by my horseman the canvas for the picture, together with the measurements and lighting, which you will forward to Raphael, begging him to begin the work and paint it at his convenience, assuring him nevertheless, that the sooner he can serve me, the better pleased I shall be. Mantua, November, 1515."

"But neither Castiglione's power of persuasion nor Raphael's affection for his friend could avail anything. When the Count returned to Rome in 1519 the Marchesa's picture was still unfinished." (1)

The progress of this small painting bids fair to be slow. The painter is too busy with other orders to give much time to this subject. The demand for samples of his work at this period of his life, is amazing. "He could now no longer devote himself unreservedly to objects of his choice, he even found it utterly impossible to cope with the multitude of commissions that were showered upon him by the mighty ones of this earth, even though a swarm of assistants were constantly kept at work. Raphael was now the Pope's architect as well as his superintendent of ceremonies. In addition to these

(1) Julia Cartwright, 1. c., VII, page 162-164.

offices, he was in 1515, appointed inspector of antiquities in succession to Fra Giocondo of Verona. He had to paint sceneries and design medals and plans, and on one occasion he was actually called upon to paint a life-size elephant on the walls of the Vatican.

Yet, with all these absorbing occupations, he found time to model several reliefs for the Chigi tomb in the Chigi Chapel of St. Maria del Popolo, notably a panel of classic design representing "Christ Conversing with the Woman of Samaria," which was cast in bronze by Lorenzotto, who also executed in marble a statue of Jonah from a model by Raphael. He furnished the architectural designs of the Villa Madama for Giulio dei Medici (afterwards Clement VII) and several of other palaces in Rome, and also for the dainty Palazzo Pandolfini in Florence, where the alternating arched and triangular pediments are for the first time introduced in secular Renaissance architecture. He furnished the engraver Marcantonio Raimondi of Bologna with designs like the famous "Judgment of Paris." He conceived and began the execution of an elaborate *Cosmography* of Rome. (1)

These were his minor occupations. His easel pictures, portraits and other productions of

(1) Raphael by Paul Konody, London, pages 68-71.

that period, are numerous. The Madonna Gonzaga is only one of them.

The Black Friars of the monastery of San Sisto in Piacenza ordered a painting of the Madonna, "the greatest and most deservedly popular of his altar-pieces," the Transfiguration was begun in competition with Sebastian del Piombo; Lorenzo of Medici, the duke of Urbino, orders a painting of the Madonna and another of St. Michael slaying the dragon to send as presents to the King of France. Raphael will add to those two paintings the St. Margaret, at present also in the Louvre. An inscription in the church of St. Silvester in Aquila discloses the fact that the Visitation now in the Prado, was painted at that time. Several other paintings of the Madonna belong to that period.

"All the most notable men who were in Rome at that period, passed through Raphael's studio, but of the portraits which he is known to have painted in Rome, comparatively few have come down to us. Among the lost portraits are those of Pietro Bembo, of Giuliano dei Medici, duke of Nemours, of Federigo Gonzaga, and of Lorenzo, duke of Urbino."

But it was Leo X who above all kept Raphael busy. The great artist painted the portrait of this Pope with his two nephews. His special

attention and the best part of his time, were given to his famous cartoons and the decorations of the loggia in the Vatican. They represent fifty-two subjects taken from Holy Scripture and are known as "The Bible of Raphael." (1)

No wonder he was slow in filling Isabella's order for the painting of the Madonna. He had to be urged many a time by the friends of the marchioness before beginning the painting, and again before it was finished. Castiglione took a special interest in the painting as we learn from several letters of that time. He was the one who took care of it after Raphael's death and brought it to Mantua.

A third person of that period, Paolucci, has left us another important document on this same painting. He was the agent in Rome of the Marchesa's brother Alphonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. "Raphael seems to have been presented to the Duke in 1513, by their mutual friend, Ariosto, but it is only after 1517 that we have certain proof of his relations with the sovereign of Ferrara." (2) This was two years after Isabella had sent the canvas for the painting to Raphael. At that time, the master's

(1) *Ib.* page 73.

(2) Muntz, 1. c., page 596.

reputation had so increased "that princes contended for the slightest sketch from his pencil." (1) The Duke of Ferrara, too, forced a promise from Raphael for a painting, sending his envoy to him often, even threatening the master with revenge if he should not begin his picture. But Raphael died too early to comply with the Duke's wishes. His envoy had been at the studio several times and was in communication with Castiglione. He writes to his master in 1519: "I have been to see M. Baldassare Castiglione with whom I spoke of Raphael, and he told me that *for a long time past he had been painting a picture for Madonna la Marchesa*, but was so busy with other things that he worked at it only in his presence. And the Count feels certain, that, when he is gone, he will work at it no more." (2)

We come now upon another important document relating to this Madonna.

A painting of the Madonna, commissioned by the court of Mantua, was not yet delivered at Raphael's death. It was in the hands of Castiglione who at the request of the Court of Mantua, sent it to that city to his mother, asking her to take care of it till his return to

(1) Muntz, Ib.

(2) Campori, 1. c.

Mantua, no doubt with the intention to take it over to the Court himself. We find these details in a letter addressed by Castiglione to his mother in Mantua, and dated from Rome, Dec. 29, 1520: (1)

“The Court insisting upon my sending this horseman, I give in his charge a few of my belongings so that I may be less embarrassed on my coming to Mantua. My earnest wish is to know if they have arrived in safety; therefore I beg from you to notify me after you have received them. Unwrap them and put them in a place where nobody can see them and where they are not exposed to smoke. Your small studio would be a fit place; *there is a painting of Our Lady by the hand of Raphael*, the head of a peasant and an antique, a small statue in marble. All those things are very dear to me and as I have told you do not let them be seen by any one. I close my letter here not to retard the messenger. There is also a package from the widowed Duchess.”

“Un quadro d'una nostra donna di man di Raffaello” are Castiglione's words. The author, d'Arcole, comments on these words: “Si ricorda

(1) Lettera scritta al 29 di dicembre del 1520 da Balthassare Castiglione a sua madre; in *Delle arti e degli artefici di Mantova*, notizie. Mantova, 1857, vol. ii pages 87, 88.



che una, nostra Donna dipinta dal Sanzio era posseduta nello anno 1627 dai Gonzaga ma non abbiamo prova che quella pittura fosse la stessa che un secolo prima era stata mandata in Mantova di Castiglione (One painting of our Lady by Sanzio is recorded as belonging in 1627 to the Gonzaga family, but we have no proof that that picture is identical with the one sent a century before to Mantua by Castiglione). Then the historian, like many after him, attempts to identify it with some known painting, averring this to be a mere supposition on his part. The inventory of the Gonzaga Gallery drawn up in 1627 mentions the paintings of only a few rooms and is incomplete. There is but one Madonna by Raphael mentioned in it. D'Arcole is right in concluding from this document that in the beginning of the seventeenth century the family of the Gonzagas owned two Madonnas by Raphael.

The importance for us of Castiglione's letter to his mother can easily be understood. Here we learn that there was in existence, in 1520, a Madonna by Raphael which was not yet delivered to the person who had ordered the picture. What is this mysterious painting and where is it now? Is it the "Pearl," now in Madrid, the only Madonna mentioned in the

Mantua catalogue? Crowe and Cavalcaselle are inclined to believe so. About the "Pearl" they write: "Quoted by Vasari as a genuine Raphael in the collection of the Counts of Canossa at Verona, it was, perhaps, the picture which Balthassare Castiglione assigned to Raphael and took with him when he left Rome for Mantua in December, 1520." (2)

That author contradicts himself on the next page, where he says: "That Vincento, Duke of Mantua, obtained the masterpiece from the Sforza, has been almost proved by circumstantial evidence." The "Pearl," indeed, was painted for the Colonna family, then it passed into the Sforza, and from there into the Gonzaga collection; while D'Arco is right in conjecturing that the picture brought from Mantua by Castiglione is a different one, and his statement is corroborated by the letters extant about the sale of the Mantua paintings, where two important works by Raphael, both belonging to the Mantuan collection, are mentioned.

The last Madonna known to the authors is that of Francis I, signed and dated 1518. The Madonna taken care of by Castiglione is not known. The Boston picture is dated 1520. It is painted on canvas, as the Mantuan picture

(2) Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Vol. II, page 470.

was; it is a Madonna, and rather small (2 feet 4 inches by 3 feet 4 inches) compared to other Holy Families by Sanzio, and must have been begun about 1515 or 1516, the symbolism of the picture being the same as that of the two Madonnas della Sedia and della Tenda, painted about the same time. The painting ordered by Isabella had a special effect of light. So has the Boston painting an oval of light which is most remarkable. The picture taken to Mantua by Castiglione must therefore be the Boston painting.

How much the Marchesa paid to Raphael's heirs, and whether Raphael himself had received beforehand a sum on account, as he did for some other paintings, we are not able to state. Neither can we say for which room of the palace the Madonna was destined. Julia Cartwright published a small work on "Raphael in Rome" previous to her two volumes on Isabella d'Este. We read in this book on page s venty-three: "Isabella d'Este waited four years in vain for a little picture which Raphael had promised to paint for her Grotta." This is a mere supposition which she abandoned in her later work. The inventory of the pictures hung up in the Grotta does not mention a Madonna by Raphael. Indeed, such a devotional painting would have

been in poor company with some works by Perugino, Mantegna and Corregio. (1)

(1) See: D'Arco: *Descrizione di alcuni oggetti d'arte posseduto da Isabella Estense, marchesa di Mantova*, 1. c., vol. ii, page 134.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PAINTING IN MANTUA.

The picture was probably destined not for a gallery, but as an ornament for the private apartments of the Marchesa, the Madonna hanging on the wall to the right of the person entering with the light falling on it from the opposite window.

“The earlier half of the seventeenth century was pre-eminently the time of the great collectors, great not only in the sense that they collected, or sought to collect, great works, but that they sought to acquire as many of them as they could. The point of view in the fifteenth century, and to a certain extent also in the sixteenth, had been quite different. Works of art were, as a rule, ordered of artists with a definite object, and for a definite place; and movable pictures, other than portraits, even when they dealt with the subject of classical antiquity, with mediaeval romance, or allegory, were, as a rule, executed with a view to the particular function which they were to fulfill,

and to the company in which they were to find themselves." (1)

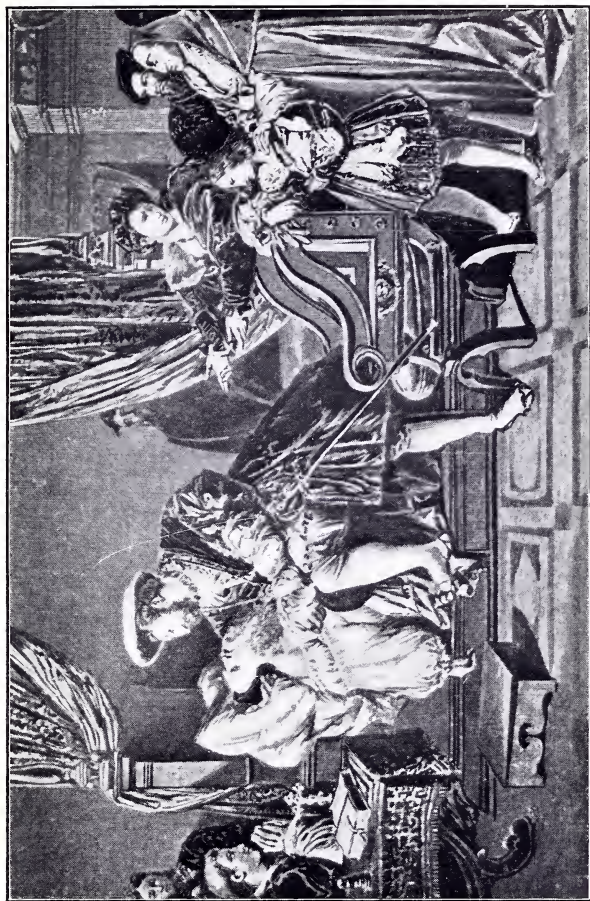
Since Isabella herself sent the canvas for the painting and gave its size and the light in which it was to be exhibited, it can clearly be seen that she destined it for a special place in her palace.

Was the painting later changed to another place after her husband's death, when she moved to another part of the palace? Her gallery seems to have always been in the same apartment. "In the inventory that was taken in 1542, the pictures are all noted down as still in the Grotta, and it appears from the negotiations of the sale of the 'Triumph' in the letters of Daniel Nys, of the year 1627, that the pictures were also at that time in the Grotta, at any rate in part." (2) This devotional picture painted by Raphael is not in the inventories of the gallery, because perhaps Isabella was specially attached to this painting of the Madonna and kept it in her own private apartments so that she might have it before her eyes all the time, and hence it probably followed her to her new quarters.

The palace in which the Mantua collection was stored was a rather irregular agglomeration

(1) Claude Phillips, *l. c.*, page 8.

(2) Andrea Mantegna, by Paul Kristeller, page 346.



INGRES  
LEONARDO DA VINCI DYING IN THE ARMS OF FRANCIS I., KING OF FRANCE





of buildings, but in richness of decoration it excelled many residences of kings and emperors. What remains of it today gives us an idea of the splendor of Isabella's court. Those walls were covered with frescoes by such men as Mantegna, Lorenzo Costa the Younger and especially Giulio Romano. Giulio Peppi, called Romano from Rome his birthplace, received a call to Mantua four years after Raphael's death and remained in that city till the time of his death, 1546. Surrounded by a number of pupils, he displayed great activity during those twenty-two years and decorated several halls in the Reggia. Here were stored the masterpieces of Italian art. The "sala di Trionfi" contained the nine pieces of Mantegna's Triumph of Caesar which are now in Hampton Court, England. In the next room were the famous portraits of the Emperors by Titian. The Grotta had paintings by Perugino, Mantegna, Lorenzo Costa, all due to the inspiration of Isabella herself. They are now in the Louvre. The walls of the Sala di Fiumi were covered with allegories by Giorgio Anselmi; while the adjoining hall contained the gallery of paintings, the pride of Mantua and of entire Italy. (1)

In this palace, therefore, the visitors who

(1) Julia Cartwright, *l. c.*, Vol. II, page 309.

passed through Mantua could behold our Madonna. Among them let us mention Charles V on his memorable trip through Italy. He received Federigo, Isabella's son, in Rome. "The Emperor honored Federigo with marks of especial favor, and invited him to occupy rooms close to his own. Before long Charles V graciously informed the Marchesa of his intention to raise her son to the rank of duke, and further intimated his willingness to visit her at Mantua on his return to Germany." (1)

The Marchesa prepared for the honor that awaited her. Giulio Romano found here a splendid opportunity to show his talent both along architectural lines in building arches of triumph, and along decorative lines in designing scenery for theatrical plays. His originality of conception and rapidity of execution were equally remarkable on this grand occasion. "Fifty noble youths, clad in white, and bearing long silver staves in their hands carried a white satin baldachino over the Emperor's head as he rode through the crowded streets, under a series of triumphal arches designed by Giulio Romano. The utmost ingenuity had been expended on these decorations. Each arch was adorned with groups of gods and goddesses, and inscribed

with Greek and Latin verses. Mars and Venus, Mercury and Pallas saluted Caesar in the words of Virgil and in the name of Mantua. On the Piazza di San Pietro a colossal Victory held the crown of laurel over the Emperor's head. The Emperor was feasted during four weeks, during which he was shown the art treasures of the Gonzagas." (1) "He saw the treasures of Isabella's Grotta, the famous armory in the Corte Vecchia, and the frescoes of the story of Psyche, which Giulio Romano had painted in Federigo's new Palazzo del Fe. But, more than any of these he admired the portraits and Holy Families."

Later on Mantua was visited by another guest of a different character, but dear to every Catholic heart—St. Aloysius Gonzaga. He made a stay of seven months in that city. Born in the Castle of Castiglione, which is situated on the high road about half-way between Brescia and Mantua, he belonged to a side branch of the Gonzaga family, to that of the Marquises of Castiglione. He was thus a distant relative of the Duke Guglielmo, who occupied the throne after the death of his brother Francesco III, 1550, both being grandsons of Isabella d'Este. The young saint left Florence, November 10

(1) *Ib.* page 325.

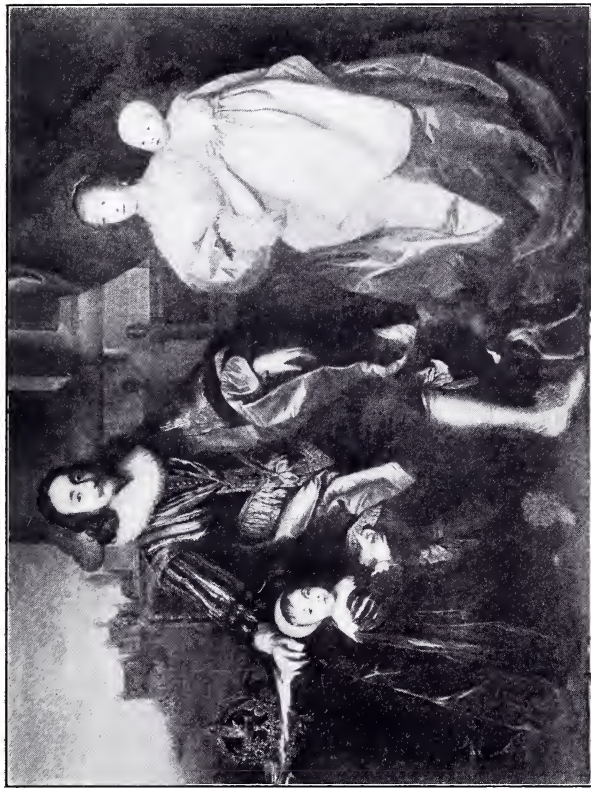
1579, to repair to Mantua. He was eleven years and eight months old, and at that tender age resolved to embrace the religious state of life and to give up the marquisate to his brother, Rudolph. In November of the year 1579 the Marquis recalled his sons from Florence to Mantua, while he himself, at the death of the Duke William, undertook the governorship of the marquisate of Montferrato. Aloysius and Rudolph went with their suite to Mantua where they were to make friends with Vincent, the Duke's son, and the future head of the house of Gonzaga. (1)

They were installed in the palace of San Sebastiano, the property of the Marquis of Castiglione in that city. Here Aloysius continued his studies under P. Bresciani, which were, however, frequently broken in upon in a manner extremely distasteful to his inclinations, namely by visits to the court, attendance at festive occasions, or recreations and excursions with Prince Vincenzo. (2)

In Florence, already, the young saint liked to kneel down before paintings of the Madonna, in

(1) Meschler, S. J., *Life of St. Aloysius Gonzaga*, page 37.

(2) P. V. Cepari, S. J., *Life of St. Aloysius Gonzaga*, pages 46-347.



BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

SCHOOL OF VAN DYCK

CHARLES I., KING OF ENGLAND, AND FAMILY



which the city on the banks of the Arno was very rich. "He had found the guiding star of his life; the sweet image of our Lady was ever before his enraptured mind. It met him everywhere, in the golden mosaics of the old church portals and in the masterpieces of the great artists." (3) We may be sure, therefore, that in Mantua his enraptured gaze often rested on this marvelous piece of art, the devotional Madonna painted by the divine Sanzio.

It is said that St. Francis de Sales also visited the court of Mantua on his way to the university of Padua, 1587, and that he may thus have been another illustrious visitor who admired the Madonna.

The painting, however, was not to remain in the city of Virgil. In the following century political events brought about the sale of the rare Mantuan collection. Duke Ferdinando died in 1626, and his brother, Vincenzo II, succeeded him. His reign lasted only fourteen months, from October 29, 1626, to December 25, 1627. During that short period he squandered and scattered the greater part of the beautiful collection gathered with so much care by Isabella and the dukes who had followed her on the throne of Mantua. To Charles I of England he

(3) Meschler, S. J., 1. c., page 36.

sold a number of paintings and statues, masterpieces by Raphael, Titian, Correggio, Mantegna's nine paintings of the Triumph of Caesar, and many others.

Charles I came at a time when several great princes were following the traditions established in Italy, France and Spain at the height of the Renaissance period, and attached to their court masters of renown. Francis I of France had called to St. Cloud Leonardo da Vinci, who remained with him till his last days and died in his palace. if not in his arms, as Vasari so tenderly imagines. He had also sent for Andrea del Sarto, who did not relish the life of a court painter, and returned to Italy after one year. Charles I won Van Dyck. "It has been said many times already and yet it must be said once again, that never were limner and sitter in a more intimate and sympathetic relation the one to the other, than Van Dyck and his royal master." (1)

Charles I ranks with monarchs of former times—with Julius II, Leo X, Charles V, Philip II of Spain, and Francis I of France—not only as a patron of art, but also as a collector who brought together a gallery which is looked upon by modern authors as unsurpassed in the history

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 37.



of the world, made up of the choicest pieces of other collections and of the best paintings of contemporary artists. Rubens called him the most art loving prince of his time. In a letter to his correspondent Valavez, dated the 10th of January, 1625, he writes: "Monsieur le prince de Galles est le prince le plus amateur de la peinture qui soit au monde." Charles himself, if we are to believe Walpole, (1) was a draftsman of talent; and Rubens, during his short stay of nine months with him, did not disdain to correct his sketches.

"In 1621 we find authenticated evidence," writes Claude Phillips, "that the Prince, who is of the same age as the century, already has what is styled a gallery, and that, with the confidence in his own opinion which is characteristic of the youthful connoisseur, he does not scruple to sit in judgment on the works of one of the greatest living masters of his time." (2) Indeed, Rubens himself did not always come up to his expectations, and in daily contact with this keen critic Van Dyck passed over to his fourth manner, in which elegance is the chief quality, and became a portraitist of the first rank.

At the age of twenty-three Charles, accom-

(1) Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*.

(2) Claude Phillips, *l. c.*, page 16.

panied by his pet courtier, Buckingham, who found an equally tragic end, made a romantic journey to Spain to ask for the hand of the Infanta. His conquest ended not in that of the Spanish lady, but in the acquisition of a number of Spanish and Italian paintings.

One of the earliest and most important acquisitions was that of a part of the Mantua collection. "On his accession he set to work with redoubled energy, while maintaining in his employment the late king's painter, to collect the finest attainable pictures and works of art in different parts of the world, his most prominent agents, besides Dudley Carlton and Sir Balthassar Gerbier, being Nicholas Lanière, painter, expert and musician, and Daniel Nys, a dealer or agent residing in Italy." (1)

It appears that Nicholas Lanière, who was Master of his Majesty's Music, and also a great judge and lover of painting, was sent to Italy by the king, in 1625. (2) Sec. Lord Conway wrote to Sir Isaac Wake, Charles' ambassador in Venice: "Canterbury, June 2, 1625. His Majesty having sent over this gentleman, Mr. Lanière, to provide for him some choice pictures in Italy, has commanded me to ask you in his name to

(1) *Ib.* 1. c., page 26.

(2) Sainsbury's "Unpublished Papers," page 321.

give him your best help and assistance in directing him where such pieces may be had, giving him access to them, and that then he may buy them at as easy rates as you can get set upon them. He has bills of exchange for money and it would be one special part of your care and his, not to make known the cause of his coming because that would much enhance the price." (1)

To this ambassador probably is due the fact that Lanière and Daniel Nys could obtain an introduction, and the latter negotiate the sale. It was by no means an easy work, for Daniel Nys wrote about it to Endymion Porter:—"Venice, April 27, 1628. Since I have come into the world I have made various contracts, but never a more difficult one than this, nor yet one which has succeeded so happily. In the first place, the city of Mantua and then all the princes of Christendom, both great and small, were struck with astonishment that we could induce the Duke Vincenzo to dispose of them. The people of Mantua made so much noise about it, that if Duke Vincenzo could have had them back again, he would readily have paid double, and his people would have been willing to supply the money." (2) In the same letter he reports

(1) *Ib.* 1. c., pages 321, 322.

(2) *Ib.* page 325.

about the packing up and shipping of the treasures. "Signor Lanière, who is the bearer of this letter, has truly used every care and diligence to repair and trim up the pictures procured from the young Duke of Mantua, and has caused them to be encased and conveyed, by the ship Margaret, in a way in which his Majesty will be greatly pleased to see them." (1)

Here we have the name of the ship, the first one of the four, which carried the art treasures to the shores of England. May 12th, he writes to the same: "The ship Margaret must now be far advanced on her voyage. I have not as yet heard that she has arrived at London, so that I cannot say that his Majesty has seen the beautiful and exquisite pictures. Among them is the Madonna of Raphael del Canozza (2), for which the Duke of Mantua gave a Marquisate worth 50,000 scudi, and the late Duke of Florence would have given to the Duke of Mantua for the said Madonna 25,000 ducatoni in ready money. The man who negotiated this matter is still alive. Then there are the twelve Emperors of Titian, a large picture of Andrea del Sarto, a

(1) *Ib.* page 325.

(2) The "Pearl" of the Prado Museum, painted for the Canossa family.

picture of Michael Angelo di Caravaggio; other pictures by Titian, Correggio, Giulio Romano, Tintoretto and Guido Reni, all of the greatest beauty. In short, so wonderful and glorious a collection, that the like will never again be met with." (1)

But not all were shipped by sea. The three choicest pieces of the collection were taken over-land by Lanière himself; two pictures by Correggio and one by Raphael, which must be our Madonna, as there were but two paintings in the Mantua collection attributed to Raphael: the "Pearl" and the Madonna Gonzaga. The "Pearl" is on the ship Margaret: "his Majesty must have seen it already among the treasures shipped," the other one is carried by land. "It is now the twelfth of May. The above (letter written April 27) is a copy of my last; and this serves to confirm the departure of Signor Lanière, from whom I have letters dated Bergamo, 2nd of May. He departed via the Grisons for Basle in good health, and with five horses, God accompanying him throughout. He carries with him two pictures of Correggio, in tempera, (2) and one Raffaele, *the finest*

(1) Sainsbury, pages 325-326.

(2) The two paintings, bearing the titles *Virtue* and *Vice*, are now at the Louvre. They are water-colors, painted on canvas which had received a special preparation.

*pictures in the world*, and well worth the money paid for the whole, both on account of their rarity and their exquisite beauty. (1)

About the same time the ambassador, Sir Isaac Wake, wrote to Sec.<sup>y</sup> Lord Conway and described the itinerary followed by Lanière with his precious Madonna and his two Correggios: "Concerning the person of Mr. Lanière I can only tell your Lordship that he departed from hence yesterday, the 27th of April with the intention to pass through Helvetia, Lorraine and so to Brussels; he has a passport of mine to facilitate his passage through the countries of the Swiss and the Grisons, whither I have written likewise to my servant, Oliver, to serve him and assist him in whatsoever he shall require in those parts. I have further caused a trusty guide to come from Bergamo, expressly to take the care of his transportation, being a diligent and faithful man, who has long served me in all my voyages and acquitted himself very honestly; and lastly I lent him my barge to transport him to Padua, from whence he is to go in coach as far as Bergamo and there to take horse. He carries with him the best pieces of painting." (2)

(1) Sainsbury, page 325.

(2) *Ib.* page 327.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE PAINTING IN ENGLAND.

We have now to follow the history of the Madonna after it reached the shores of England. We come across three more documents that attest its excellence and that show how it shone there among other masterpieces of art. There are two different inventories extant in which the "small Madonna by Raphael" is appraised at £800, the highest priced of the collection for its size, and a letter by the French ambassador in which he mentions this painting. From one of these inventories we see that the picture was hung at Hampton Court. Charles I had stored his collection in several palaces. Whitehall, St. James, Hampton Court and the minor royal residences of which the chief are Greenwich, Nonesuch, Oaklands and Wimbleton. (1) It defied all rivalry and outstripped even the finest royal collections of its day—even those inherited from Charles V, Philip II and Philip III by the Spanish crown; even those inherited by

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 5.

the French crown from Francis I and the Valois Kings; even those brought together by the art loving Rudolph II, at the Imperial Castle at Prague.

The collection made by Charles could not boast such a group of genuine Leonardos as constitutes the chief glory of the Louvre, but it included the incomparable *Cartoons* of Raphael; it had at least one Giorgione which modern criticism has spared; its Titians were without a rival in the world; its Correggios unsurpassed and some of its Tintoretos genuine and splendid, if its examples of Paolo Veronese, so far as we know them, were weak and doubtful.(1)

What object had Charles in view in collecting those art treasures? He wanted not only to satisfy a craving for curiosities, a passionate love of art, but "he was bent above all on gathering together a series of the works of the great Italian masters, which, besides shedding a lustre on his reign, should serve to direct the style and refine the taste of the artistic spirit then nascent among the denizens of his benighted kingdom." (2)

(1) *Ib.* pages 75-77.

(2) Ernest Law, pages xxi-xxii. A Historical Catalogue of the Pictures in the Royal Collection at Hampton Court.



Indeed, England had not followed the artistic movement of other countries. While Italy had seen the most glorious epoch in the history of art and was to remain for centuries to come the leader, and while the Low Countries, Spain, Germany, and, to a certain degree, France, had schools of their own, England had given practically nothing to the world of art. Holbein had come over from Germany; Penni, the brother of Raphael's pupil, from Italy; some portraitists and miniaturists from the Netherlands and France; but those artists had not yet succeeded in waking up the English nation from its lethargy. The efforts of Charles I were not appreciated by his people. His high ideal could not be understood. A strong opposition was started against him, which increased and led to a revolution. Soon his throne was engulfed in the vortex, and he himself led to execution.

Charles' paintings adorned the walls of his palaces. Those of St. James and Whitehall contained by far the greatest number. Hampton Court harbored some 382. A special building, nevertheless, the Banqueting House, belonging to Whitehall, was reserved for his gallery. Different from Isabella d'Este who used as a theatre the hall containing Mantegna's paintings of the Triumph of Caesar, Charles I did

not allow the performance of plays in the Banqueting Hall, but had a new chamber built for this purpose at a cost of £2,500. As soon as the king found himself in danger, before his escape from Hampton Court, he wrote a letter to Colonel Whalley, his custodian at that place, with strong recommendations to protect his art treasures of all sorts. (1)

Hampton Court, his ordinary residence, seems to have contained the choicest pieces of his collection. Mrs. Jameson "than whom no critic was more competent to pronounce" used the following words to describe it: "The list of pictures which hung in his own private apartments gives a high idea of the elevation and delicacy of his taste. In his bedroom were the portraits of his wife and children by Van Dyck, of his sister Elizabeth of Bohemia and her children, of his amiable brother Prince Henry, a Magdalen by Correggio, a Madonna by Perugino, The Contest between the Muses and the Pieridies now in the Louvre; by his bedside hung a Holy Family, a *chef-d'oeuvre* by Raphael. In the three rooms adjoining, called the King's privy lodging rooms are eleven pictures by Titian and one by Correggio. In the second room there are eight

(1) See Henry Hewlett: Charles I as a Picture Collector, in the Nineteenth Century, August, 1890.

by Titian (including the Concert), now in the National Gallery, and the famous *Venus del Pardo*, now in the Louvre, as well as six by Giulio Romano. In the third room are three by Correggio, one of which, the lovely *Mercury and Cupid*, is now in the National Gallery; one by Raphael; three by Titian, and others by Andrea del Sarto, Giorgione and Parnigianino. All the pictures in this room are by distinguished Italian masters." (1) Hampton Court harbored the choicest pieces of his collection. The king wanted to have around him what he most admired. How often did his gaze rest lovingly upon the two Raphaels, especially upon the Holy Family, the *chef-d'oeuvre*, hanging by his bedside! Which Holy Family was it? Was it not our Madonna?

Charles' collection contained few paintings by Raphael. If we except the *Madonna Piccola Gonzaga* and the *Pearl*, the others are not worth mentioning. According to the catalogue of the Louvre drawn up in 1883 the portrait of Balthassare Castiglione by Raphael was in Charles' collection. This statement is not accepted by Raphael's biographers.

The inventory of the Somerset auction has

(1) Art Sales, by George Redford, London, 1888, Vol. I, pages 14-15.

another *Notre Dame de Raphael*, valued at £200. It is that numbered 113. This is, no doubt, "a repetition with variations of the *Madonna del Rosa* of Madrid, a Raphael in design only, and barely that." (1) A reference will be made later on to a very small painting attributed to him, a portrait of the Duke of Mantua.

Therefore the only two paintings by Raphael to which Charles would have given a place of honor in his private apartments were the two Madonnas above mentioned. Was it the *Pearl* or the *Madonna Piccola Gonzaga* which hung by his bedside? We presume it was the more devotional of the two, the one whose technique was the better, namely the *Madonna Gonzaga*. If it was the *Pearl*, and if the *Madonna Gonzaga* was in the third room, Charles would have shown very bad taste by placing her side by side with Correggio's lovely *Mercury and Cupid*.

The *Madonna* was to remain in Hampton Court more than twenty years. The beautiful collection gathered with so much care and labor was soon to be scattered to the four winds. If Walpole is not mistaken, the sale began as early as 1645; according to other authors the collection was kept together until parliament,

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 9.



SHRADER

CROMWELL AT WHITEHALL



May 23, 1649, resolved upon the disposal of the personal effects of the late King, Queen and Prince, and gave an order to have the same inventoried, appraised and sold, except such as should be thought fit for the use of the state. "The Act was passed in the following July, but though it has repeatedly been said that the pictures and other works of art were sold at public auction, there is no account in the Public Record Office of any such auction. An auction sale, as we understand it, was not the customary mode of procedure in such cases, nor did it become established in London for nearly a century later." (1) This sale must be considered rather as "a competition, by privately pitting one likely purchaser against another." (2)

The sale lasted till 1653. The paintings brought the paltry sum of £38,000. To think that in our day two Madonnas by Sanzio, not his best at that, should have each been sold for four times that sum! Those at Hampton Court, which were 382 in number, went for £4,675. (3)

There are several documents on this sale

(1) George Redford, 1. c., page 15.

(2) 1b.

(3) A Historical Catalogue of the Pictures in the Royal Collection at Hampton Court, by Ernest Law, page xxv.

which inform us how our Madonna passed into other hands. Mention is first made in Claude Phillips' exquisite study, the *Picture Gallery of Charles I*, of an inventory discovered by himself. He says: "The writer of the present notice has found at the South Kensington Museum another inventory which appears to be in substantial agreement, so far as it goes, with the inventories before mentioned. It is entered as follows in the catalogue of the Art Library: 'Charles I. Inventories of the Pictures, plate, jewels, statues with their valuations as possessed by King Charles I and appraised during the Commonwealth, time of sale 1649-1653. A well-written official M. S., folio (c. 1681). A transcript of the above sixty-one pages in modern writing (S. K. M.)'" (1)

While Charles I still had control of the state affairs, Vanderdoort, the keeper of the pictures at Whitehall and St. James, drew up a catalogue of the same. As he limits himself to the two palaces just mentioned, and as our Madonna was at Hampton Court, we do not find it referred to in his catalogue; but it is included in the inventory given above: *Little Madonna and Christ* by Raphael, £800.

Claude Phillips comments upon this short

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 54.



item in the following words: "Mention is also made in the South Kensington Inventory (Hampton Court), and in Walpole's *Anecdotes*, though not in Vanderdoort's catalogue, which was confined to Whitehall and St. James, of a *Little Madonna and Christ* estimated at £800. *Considering its small size, it brought the highest price at the sale.* It is clear that the Madonna so highly esteemed *must have been a well known and coveted work universally attributed to the master.*" (1)

This author then tries to identify it with *La Vierge de la Maison d'Orléans*. "Such a description (Little Madonna and Christ) seems best met by the little *Vierge de la Maison d'Orléans* (11½ by 14½ inches). This is probably (?) the little picture described by Vasari as having been painted for Duke Guibaldo of Urbino, and entered in the Urbino inventory as 'Quadretto d'una Madonna con un Christo in braccio, in legno (on wood), che viene da Raffaele.' After the sixteenth century it is not to be traced, so far as the writer is aware, until it reappears in the collection of the Duke d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIV, whence it passed by inheritance to that of the Regent. It must be borne in mind that there is nothing at present

(1) 1b. page 80.

beyond some slight probability to support this hypothesis.' (1)

This painting cannot be the *Little Madonna and Christ* valued in the inventory at £800. This must be the Madonna Gonzaga which was finished in 1520 and which belongs to Raphael's Roman period, while the *Vierge de la Maison d'Orléans* was painted in 1507 and belongs therefore to his Florentine period. Then the Mantua painting is on canvas, while this one is on wood; moreover, the *Vierge de la Maison d'Orléans* is rather an inferior work and could not have passed for the highest price of the sale; and, finally, it was never in Charles' collection.

If we now compare the valuation of paintings belonging or attributed to other great masters with that of our Madonna we can ascertain how the commissioners were impressed with the transcendent beauty of this painting. *A Man's Head* by Rembrandt is appraised at two pounds. Two Titians are supposed to bring respectively one hundred and one hundred sixty pounds, a Giorgione, thirty pounds, a Perugino, fifteen pounds, a Rubens, fifty pounds.

Agreeing with this inventory found by Claude Phillips is that discovered by a French writer, the Count de Cosnac, whose book on *les richesses*

(1) Claude Phillips, page 80.

*du palais Mazarin* contains documents on the Cardinal's acquisitions at the sale of Charles' art treasures. Here we come across two important documents on our Madonna, a letter by H. de Bordeaux to the Cardinal, mentioning the *small Madonna* and the inventory of the Somerset sale, discovered by the Count in the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in France. This inventory is entitled: "Etat de quelques tableaux exposés en vente à la maison de Somerset, May, 1650." Here we find several paintings attributed to Raphael. No. 41 is *La Transfiguration*, by Raphael, fifteen pounds. We see here how an inferior copy is simply put under the master's name; but the commissioners by placing such a low price on the painting disclaim any belief in their statement. No. 145: *Un homme avec un bonnet noir*, by Raphael, thirty pounds. About this painting Claude Phillips says: "The painter of the panel had nothing to do with the Urbinate or with his school." No. 60: *Les cartons de Raphaël des Actes des Apôtres*, three hundred pounds. Claude Phillips says about them that "through the instrumentality of Rubens, in 1630, King Charles purchased what the modern world holds to have been his greatest treasure—the series of the seven world-famous cartoons of Raphael,

the Acts of the Apostles." (1) Yet they are appraised only at three hundred pounds, while No. 326 La Petite Notre Dame de Raphael, priced eight hundred pounds, is looked upon as far more valuable.

Let us note this No. 326.\* On the straining board of the Boston painting we find, written with red chalk, the No. 324. The original frame belonging to the picture when it was discovered is in Ryan and Duffee's studio, 500 Boylston Street, Boston. According to frame dealers of that city it is an English frame, about two hundred and fifty years old. On the back of this frame the writer was the first one to notice an inscription, half effaced, done in pencil, giving the same number as on the straining board of the painting—324—followed by the letters "S. Auct." (Somerset Auction). These two numbers, 326 of the inventory and 324 on the picture and frame, present no slight coincidence. They must be identical. In all probability, therefore, the picture now in Boston is the same small Madonna by Raphael, mentioned in the Somer-

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 29.

\*This number 326 is apparently an error, for in the catalogue the numbers ranged under certain alphabetic letters always progress so that the smaller number precedes the larger one, except in this case, where 326 precedes 325, so we probably have to read here 324.

set inventory. Comparing this high valuation, eight hundred pounds to the three hundred pounds of the cartoons and the others given in this inventory, thirty pounds for *A Man with a Black Cap*, by *Raphael*, fifteen pounds for *A Transfiguration*, by *Raphael*, let us remember Claude Phillips' words above mentioned, the Small Madonna so highly priced must have been "a well known and coveted work universally put down to the master."

Our Madonna escaped destruction. A decree was twice voted that "all such pictures as have the representation of The Second Person of the Trinity, or of the Virgin Mary upon them shall be burned," and twice cancelled, that they should bring the money—*auri sacra fames*, "the cupidity that invariably attends upon hypocrisy thus interposing to save to the world some of the noblest works of human genius." (1)

This is the second time it escaped destruction. If it had not been bought by the unfortunate King, it probably would have been destroyed in 1530 during the invasion of Italy by the Germans, like other art treasures in Mantua. (2)

The Revolutionists were not satisfied with disposing of the picture galleries: "Having thus got

(1) Ernest Law, 1. c.

(2) See Mantua, by Selwyn Brinton, pages 156-170.

rid of the monarchy the Roundheads next set to work to dispose of the Royal treasures. An inventory was accordingly made by order of Parliament, with the appraisement of every possession of the murdered sovereign, not only the matchless paintings and sculptures, the costly tapestries, and superb jewels, but even the furniture, window curtains and bed coverlets were to be included in the sale. Everything that had belonged to the late Charles Stuart, or recalled the splendors of his court; everything that bore the impress of art or betokened the influence of refinement was to be brought to the hammer to gratify the spite of the coarse and sour fanatics. To them the paintings of Raphael and Titian, the marvels of the antique world and the tapestries of Flanders, the glorious Gothic cathedrals, the baronic castles, and Tudor manor-houses were but works of worldly luxury and superstitious profaneness. And being totally destitute of that philosophic tolerance which enables people to admire aesthetically what is repugnant to their religious and moral prejudices, they hastened to sweep it all away." (1)

There were buyers as well. Among these were Mazarin, who rivalled Charles I in collect-

(1) Ernest Law, 1. c., page xxv.

ing curios: Philip IV, King of Spain, who bought paintings through Don Alonzo de Cardenas, the Spanish ambassador; Archduke Leopold William, Regent of the Netherlands; Queen Christine of Sweden; Everhard Jabach of Cologne, who settled later in Paris and whose collection formed the nucleus of the Louvre galleries.

Among the agents negotiating the sale, Henry de Bordeaux was one of the most active. His correspondence with Cardinal Mazarin forms a series of documents relative to this sale. We have in it a letter written to Mazarin from London, dated October 23, 1653, where the Small Madonna is mentioned. Mazarin coveted the picture, but was not willing to pay the price. Among other things, Henry de Bordeaux says here: "I have been also told that the small painting by the same painter (Raphael) representing a Virgin, is also out of England and is not longer in the hands of the Member of Parliament who had bought it." (1)

Here we obtain two bits of information: that the Small Madonna had been for a while in the hands of a Member of Parliament, and that he sold it to some foreign buyer. Who was this Member of Parliament? Among the buyers

(1) Gabriel Jules de Cosnac, 1. c., page 187.

belonging to that body of men we meet two names, Hutchison and Harrison. (1) It was into the hands of Harrison that the painting fell.

This we know from Richard Symons, who mentions the paintings bought by Harrison. His notes are preserved in the Egerton MS., in the British Museum, a contemporary document of the sale. Symons had traveled in Italy, was somewhat of a connoisseur, and liked to insert here and there quaint scraps of Italian in his descriptions of the pictures he saw. He mentions the names of several persons formerly employed at court by the King, each one of whom had in his care or owned paintings formerly belonging to Charles' collection. There is one Harrison, the *King's Embroiderer*, a Mr. Bagley, the *King's Glazier*, Mr. Murray, the *King's Tailor*, a certain Wilson, etc. December 30, 1652, he writes that he had seen some of these paintings "at one Harrison's, the King's Embroider, at a wharf near the Thames, near Somerset House." Harrison was not far from the palace where so many precious paintings were for sale. He himself had bought some choice pictures to sell them at a higher price, making the best of the opportunity offered him to increase his fortune. He had others also in

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 49.



his care, some of which were sold to the Spanish ambassador and brought to the Commonwealth five hundred pounds. (1)

This *King's Embroiderer*, who turned timber-dealer after Charles' death, had certainly fine specimens in his house. Mention is made of five Titians, one Montegna, one Bronzino, and a painting by the daughter of Gentileschi. These are the only names of which Symons is certain, finding on the pictures a board with an inscription to that effect. He does not always give credence to the labels. He says of a St. Jerome, "Some say by M. Angelo, 'tis upon board, I believe it to be of Giulio Romano." No name is given for a *ritratto* (*portrait*) of a *fine boy from Mantua*, nor for a Small Madonna and *putto* (infant), both mentioned in the same line. The two pictures were no doubt side by side, and both Mantuan pieces attributed to Raphael by the parliamentary commissioners. The *fine boy from Mantua* is No. 47 of the Somerset inventory: *Le Marquis de Mantua, par Raphael, two hundred pounds*. Claude Phillips mentions it: "Another picture ascribed to Raphael in the inventory was a *Marquis' Head* by Raphael, evidently identical with Vanderdoort's *The Marquis of Mantua, who by Charles V was made*

(1) See Diego Velasquez, by Carl Justi, page 380.

*first duke of Mantua (5½ inches by 8½ inches.)"* (1)

Here is the history of that small portrait. After Federigo, Isabella's d'Este's son, had been given into the care of Pope Julius II as a hostage of the Venetians, his mother wanted a portrait of him to be made by the best painter in Rome. Raphael was consequently asked to do this work. He promised he would and began the portrait, the young boy giving him several sittings. When Pope Julius II died suddenly, Federigo returned to his mother, and Raphael gave up the order. One of his pupils seems then to have taken hold of the master's sketch; he finished and sold it. It can be considered as a school work. Later on it was in the possession of a servant of Cardinal Colonna. Federigo, then Duke of Mantua, hearing of the portrait, induced the Cardinal to use his influence with the servant, who reluctantly parted with the picture. Cardinal Colonna then presented it to the Duke. Later on it was shipped to England with the other Mantuan pieces, but not catalogued as a painting by Raphael. No doubt the commissioners used Sanzio's name for the purpose of selling it at high price. Harrison had it in his house with the *Small Madonna and putto*.

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 80.



BOSTON, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

VELASQUEZ

PHILIP IV., KING OF SPAIN



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PICTURE IN SPAIN.

The question arises now: What became of the Madonna Gonzaga after it had left England? We find it later in the Escorial. It had therefore been bought by Alonzo de Cardenas, the Spanish ambassador. Alonzo did not make this acquisition in the name of the King, but in that of Don Luis de Haro, the prime minister, who "presented" the paintings to His Majesty, Philip IV. So the dignity of the Spanish Court was not impaired by the purchase of goods which by right belonged to the family of Charles I.

This purchase of as many paintings as possible remained a secret. Therefore, H. de Bordeaux, when inquiring in the name of Mazarin about the Small Madonna, was answered that it had been sold outside the country. No information concerning the buyer or the sum paid for it was given. When the art treasures bought in England arrived in Spain, a train of eighteen mules carried them from the port of Corunna to Madrid. The purchase was kept so secret that

the ambassador of Charles II was handed his papers and turned out of the country with his suite.

"Philip remembering his royal guest of some twenty-five years before, and his genuine enthusiasm over the Titians, must evidently have felt some compunction, some shame even, in the matter, seeing that when the ship containing the precious freight of masterpieces arrived at Corunna, the aged Cobbington, who, with Sir Edward Hyde was in Madrid as Charles II's ambassador, suddenly received his passports. The real reason for this abrupt dismissal was, as they afterwards learned, that they should be prevented from beholding the arrival in Madrid of pictures formerly among Charles' choicest treasures." (1) Charles was a king without a throne, so the Spanish monarch ran no risk of getting his country involved in war by this insult to his ambassador.

The mules loaded with the art treasures entered Madrid during the night. Everything was quietly unpacked and stored away, and nobody was the wiser. Of some of the paintings no mystery was made, for they were exhibited for a time in the large sacristy of the Escorial. Among them was Raphael's Madonna known

(1) Claude Phillips, 1. c., page 50.

as *The Pearl*. It is said that the King, on first seeing this painting, exclaimed: "This is the pearl of my collection." Henceforth the name remained attached to it. It was no secret in London that "the Pearl" had brought £2000, a sum inferior to that of the Madonna Gonzaga if we consider the size of both paintings.

The Escorial, which received the greater number of the art treasures bought from England, is a colossal building having a perimeter of 3,000 feet. It is at the same time a residential palace, college, monastery, library, art gallery, etc. It was here that the Madonna Piccola remained up to the invasion of Spain by the French.

The Escorial had been begun by the order of Philip II. It served as an art gallery from the beginning. The acquisitions made by Philip IV in England excelled in importance those of former ages. He is undoubtedly the monarch whose portrait is more frequently found in our museums than that of any other king. His qualities did not equal those of Charles V or Philip II, but his prestige was due to his court painter Velasquez. If ever a genius shed lustre on an otherwise inglorious reign, it is this Spanish limner who entered the King's service at the age of twenty-four, when his royal master was only eighteen. From that time on he painted his por-

trait so often, that Philip's features are better known to us than those of other kings. Boston alone possesses two of those portraits.

The painters employed by the Spanish kings had their residence in the Elcazar, the royal palace. Here Velasquez felt perfectly at home amid the pomp and splendor of the Spanish court. Always attired in the richest garments, submitting in everything to the strict exigencies of Spanish etiquette, he was at the same time a kind of curator of Philip's galleries dispersed about the Elcazar and the Escorial.

Philip IV has at least the merit of having taken interest in the art movement of his age. He was himself a draftsman. His treasures, however, were not easily accessible to the public. Spanish art was hardly known outside of Spain before the days of Napoleon. Richard Cumberland made in 1782 the following remark:—  
 "Spain has given birth to many eminent painters, of whom there is no memorial outside of their own country. Spain, however, is enriched by many admirable examples of their art, dispersed in churches, convents, palaces, where the curiosity of modern travelers rarely carries them." (1) Charles III even forbade the exportation of Murillo's paintings.

(1) Richard Cumberland, *Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain*, Vol. 1, page 1.



So this Spanish painter of the Madonna was known outside of Spain by name only, not by his works; and this feature explains how our painting could later on pass for one of Murillo's works.

While it was in the Escorial, it was ascribed to Sanzio. It was seen there by Raphael Mengs, the painter and writer, and is described in unmistakable terms in the two volumes of his voyage through Spain, which were published after his death in 1783 by one of his friends. We have already mentioned this description of our painting. (1) "I saw another picture of the Madonna, half-size, with the Infant; it is the same composition as that of the famous painting of Florence known by the name of *Madonna of the Chair*, with this difference that St. John is absent from the painting of which we speak. Its form is square, while that of the Madonna of the Chair is round, and the figures of the latter are nearly of natural size. This painting in the palace Escorial seems to be painted in great part by Raphael himself. It is much more than a mere sketch, it is rather a finished work. The head of the Virgin in particular is entirely by him and is full of life and expression.

(1) See page 19.

Finally, it ranks with any one of his best works." (1)

In this description given by Raphael Mengs we can easily recognize the Boston painting. The figure of St. John is missing, the form of the painting is square, and the figures are of lesser size than those of the Madonna of the Chair. Moreover, if we take into account the composition itself, the Christ Child nestling, as in the Madonna della Sedia, in His Mother's arms, except that the Infant is on the left of the beholder, while in the Madonna della Sedia, He is on the right, we can go through Raphael's entire work, from the day he left the tutelage of Perugino to that moment when struck with fever he dropped his brush before the canvas on which he was painting the Transfiguration, never to take it up again, and we shall not find another Madonna to which the description above given can be applied.

But the chaotic changes of this small canvas were not yet over. It had to share the fate of many other famous paintings. It was seized by the French and brought to Paris never more to revisit Spain; different in this from the "Pearl," which it had followed up to now and which

(1) *Opere di Antonio Mengs.* In Bessano, MDCCCL, XXXIII, Vol. II, page 75



PARIS, LOUVRE

DAVID

NAPOLEON CROSSING THE ALPS



again found its way to the old Spanish capital, where it still remains.

When Spain became involved in the Napoleonic wars, the paintings found in the Escorial, the Elcazar, the palaces of the rich, in churches and convents, became the prey of the invaders. It would lead us too far to show here how from 1794 to 1815 a great number of the art treasures of the invaded countries were seized as booty by the French. In 1794, after the early successes of the French armies of the Revolution, the first cartloads of art treasures came from Brussels, Belgium. On the 9 Thermidor, of the year VI of the Republic, July 27, 1798, a "Feast of the masterpieces" was celebrated. (1) The art works of Italy arrived in twenty-nine cartloads. The artists of the Conservatory accompanied the long train. On one of the banners the following words were written:—

Greece has yielded up and Rome could not retain,

Their lot has now changed twice; it shall not change again.

The paintings were exhibited in the Salle Carrée for a while and then assigned to the

(1) See *Lectures pour tous*, 1914. Conférence de M. Henry Roujon, d l'Académie française, Sur Joachim Lebreton, premier secrétaire de l'Académie des Beaux-arts.

galleries of the Louvre. The museum was soon overstocked, and still new treasures arrived. They were sent to provincial museums, to Lille, Cambrai, Besançon; new museums were created even in invaded countries, at Brussels, Geneva, Antwerp, Mainz. Some were taken back by the generals who had seized them. Josephine, Napoleon's wife, derived quite an income from the sale of paintings presented to her. There was a market of pictures such as the world had never seen. At the downfall of Napoleon only a small number could be recovered by the countries to which they formerly belonged. (1)

Soult had been very active in Spain in picking up art treasures. He sent agents before him with Bermudez's *Dictionary of Art in Spain* to locate paintings and to offer a price: "The Marshal seized the objects of his covetousness and carefully guarded the legality of their titles by forcing their owners to sign fictitious bills of sale. These trophies were transferred to Soult's house in Paris and for many years afterwards the thrifty veteran derived a large income from selling them, one by one, to wealthy English nobles. Hundreds of other pictures had been huddled into the Elcazar awaiting transporta-

(1) *Les conquêtes artistiques de la Révolution et de l'Empire*, par Charles Launier, Paris, 1902.



GERARD

JOSEPH BONAPARTE, KING OF SPAIN







tion to France; but the sudden retreat of the French army compelled their abandonment." (1) Some cartloads containing paintings of the palaces of the rich in Madrid had only reached Bayonne when the allies entered France. At Napoleon's downfall Soult gave over to the museum some paintings, but only those which he deemed lost for him and which he knew would be restored to their rightful owners.

Our Madonna did not fall into his hands as did the famous *Immaculate Conception* by Murillo but it was added to the collection of Joseph Bonaparte, King of Spain, and followed its new master to the shores of America.

(1) Murillo, by M. Sweetser, Boston, 1877, page 115.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PAINTING IN THE HANDS OF JOSEPH BONA- PARTE.

Joseph Bonaparte was an elder brother of the Emperor. An ardent admirer of Napoleon, he was devoted to him as only a brother can be, accepting from his hands the crown of Naples, to change it at his request for that of Spain, in 1808. As King of Naples he gained the good will of his subjects, who appreciated his good intentions and the new constitution received at his hands. In Spain he hoped to do the same work. He met the Spanish Junta in Bayonne. All the members agreed in this, "that his acceptance of the throne would calm all troubles, assure their independence of the monarchy, the integrity of its territory, its liberty and its happiness." A constitution was given the country similar to that received by Naples, and he entered Madrid, July 20, 1808, and took his residence in the Escorial.

The new king soon realized his difficult position. Eighty thousand French troops were not sufficient to quell the insurrections, and the great Emperor received in Spain the first terrible

blow which shattered his empire, as he himself stated later in St. Helena.

Joseph Bonaparte followed the example of the French generals and made a collection of paintings, statues and tapestries. This collection was sold bit by bit and proved a great financial resource in his subsequent difficulties. Some of his paintings were on his estates. Others were sent from Spain to Paris after he had taken up his residence in the Escorial. There he had gathered a large collection. He was liberal in donating paintings to friends and generals. After the battle of Almonacid won by Sebastiani, Joseph offered him congratulations on his success, recommended him to his great brother and as a token of gratitude presented him with six choice paintings from his collection. (1) But Joseph was not to keep all the art treasures he had accumulated in the Escorial. When he left Spain, his paintings were in his baggage train. They were captured by the Duke of Wellington. The English general acted as Joseph had done and failed to restore the paintings to their rightful owners, but shipped them off to London. Some of these paintings are today on the walls of Wellington's Apsley House, in London.

(1) Bigarré, aide-de-camp du roi Joseph; *Mémoires*, page 256.

The capture of this baggage train explains why Joseph owned a relatively small gallery. In his wanderings from one country to another, in his position as King of Naples and later of Spain, he we had rare opportunities to enrich his gallery, but find in it only one hundred and seventy paintings the greater number of which were inferior works.

Our Madonna was in the Escorial with other art treasures. He simply appropriated the painting and sent it to France. Before it was forwarded to one of his estates it probably was sent to the Louvre for exhibition. The day arrived when the marriage ceremony between Napoleon and Marie Louise took place; it was celebrated in the "Salle Carrée" of the Louvre. The hymeneal procession wound its way from the Tuileries through the long gallery leading to said apartment. For the adornment of these rooms exquisite paintings were required, some of them of a devotional character; we are free to suppose that the Madonna Gonzaga had a prominent place among them.

Either the original or a copy of the Madonna was sure to create a sensation in those times, for the composition was profusely reproduced by the new process of lithography discovered some ten years before.

One of these lithographs bears an inscrip-

tion in French and German: "From the gallery of the Duke of Leuchtenberg in Munich, Painted by Murillo." The original, on canvas, is 2' 10'' high and 2' 2'' wide. There exists in the gallery of the Duke of Leuchtenberg in St. Petersburg a copy of the Madonna Gonzaga known by the name of Madonna Leuchtenberg. On this copy, by some crude folds the monogram of Raphael is imitated in such a manner as to make it evident that the copyist did not understand the meaning of that signature. The painting is not quite so large as the original. This copy was formerly attributed to Murillo. It may have come from Spain, but is it by the hand of the Spanish painter of the Madonna?

When paintings formerly belonging to Charles I arrived in Spain and were hung on the walls of the Escorial, few years had passed since Murillo was copying works of great masters in the galleries of the same palace. He had come to Madrid to ask Velasquez for help and advice. The court painter received him cordially and enabled him to study the works of Titian, Van Dyck and other great masters, in the Escorial. Whether he came later, after the arrival of the paintings from England, we do not know.

Painting the Madonna was with him a passion.

The Leuchtenberg painting, attributed for a long time to Murillo, is by the hand of a Spanish master. It probably fell into the hands of one of the French generals who had invaded Spain at the head of the French armies. It was probably presented to Josephine, the Empress, who turned it over to her son, Eugène Beauharnais. Eugène married the eldest daughter of the King of Bavaria and settled in Munich after the treaty of Vienna, assuming the titles of Duke of Leuchtenberg and Prince of Eichstaet. He owned a fairly good collection of paintings. The copy of the Madonna Gonzaga thus received the name of Madonna Leuchtenberg. This painting is mentioned in two catalogues of the gallery, dating from 1835 and 1837.

This copy in turn was reproduced many times. There are slight variations from the original. The figures are adapted to the Spanish type,—their faces are rounder, the necks shorter than on the original. The rays of light beaming forth from behind the Child's head are more extended, as we find them on Murillo's paintings of the Child. A great master copying some famous painting invariably brings the figures nearer the types of his own conception or of his own country.

The copy always belonged to a gallery and

is better known than the original, which disappeared before an extensive study of the works of Raphael was made. We can thus partly explain how this composition passed for that of Murillo. Other masters may have copied the Madonna Gonzaga. Rubens was in the service of the Duke of Mantua from 1600 to 1608; there he studied the masterpieces of the Gonzaga collection. Van Dyck saw the same painting in Hampton Court. A copy of the Madonna Gonzaga has been found in Boston; it is attributed to Van Dyck by family tradition. Some day a copy belonging to Rubens may be unearthed; it would be interesting to see how Rubens treated this subject. Titian copied Raphael's portrait of Julius II, and the copy is so perfect that the identity of the original is a very perplexing question for art critics. Rubens himself copied the *Europa* of Titian, now in Mrs. Gardner's gallery, Boston, and the copy is preserved in the Prado Museum, in Madrid.

Another reason why this composition is attributed to Murillo is the following: Joseph Bonaparte knew he had in his collection a Madonna by Raphael, but he did not know which was which. So he attributed to Sanzio a painting of the Madonna, which does not belong

to that master; while the real Raphael was ascribed to Murillo, the great Spanish painter of the Madonna. In an inventory of his collection drawn up by himself we read: "\$3,000. Une Vierge avec l'Enfant-mosaïque ovale—Raphaël, bois." Decidely his so-called Raphael is not highly prized by him, since he has on the same list a Titian appraised at \$15,000; a Murillo at \$15,000, and a Raphael Mengs at \$15,000.

What became of this so-called Raphael? It was sold to Lord Ashburton. If now we go through Lord Ashburton's collection recorded by Kugler, about 1845, some ten years after the sale of the painting in question, we do not find there one single work by Raphael. (1)

Very simply the error was soon discovered by English connoisseurs, and the painting was attributed to some other master. Joseph Bonaparte was no connoisseur. He had probably the first gallery of some importance that ever was brought to these States. Of this collection two inventories have been found. The first one is by the hands of Joseph himself. His main object in it was to see what he could realize on his paintings. According to his calculations they might bring him the sum of 722,000 francs.

(1) See Kugler, *Handbuch der Geschichte der Malerei*, vol. iii, page 346.





VIENNA

SCHOOL OF RUBENS

### THE CHILD CHRIST AND ST. JOHN

(DETAIL FROM A LOST PAINTING BY RUBENS FORMERLY BELONGING TO JOSEPH BONAPARTE)



From his valuation as well as from the titles and attribution to master and school we see that he had little knowledge of art. At that time books on art were few, the history of art but in its infancy and, the Spanish artists at least, just known by name outside their own country.

The second catalogue was drawn up after his death, for a sale which took place at Bordentown, on Sept. 18, 1845. The collection was at that time sorely depleted. Joseph had either donated to friends or sold some thirty-three paintings and had taken with him to Europe in 1836, twenty-six works of the greatest masters. What remained of the gallery was catalogued carefully for this Bordentown sale. We find here much valuable information about the gallery, though not enough to reconstruct it in its entirety. We find masters with whose works Joseph did not seem to be acquainted; Rembrandt, Guercino, Bassano, Sebastian del Piombo, Ruysdael, Terburgh, to mention only the most famous. He was not able to distinguish between a copy, a school work, and the original. In certain cases he did not read the signature correctly; thus we find "Laniesse" for "Lairesse," "Coyret" for "Coypel." Sometimes he learns it from his visitors. In a letter of his we find this very name of Coypel mentioned correctly when the

painting in question is presented to General Cadwalader, in 1839, just before Joseph's second trip to Europe, whence he was never to return.

From the different valuations too we see how little Joseph knew about art.

In the list just mentioned (1) we find two paintings by Joseph Vernet, now in the Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. They are both appraised at 25,000 francs. A Mary Magdalen by Titian is valued at the same sum. It does not require great knowledge of art to know that Joseph Vernet cannot rank with Titian, especially if the work in question was the Mary Magdalen ordered by Isabella d'Este and mentioned with such enthusiasm in one of her letters that she looked upon it as the best painting then in existence.

Joseph Bonaparte was not acquainted with Murillo's works. Though he appraised *St. John in the Desert* by Murillo at 40,000 francs, and two Madonnas by the same painter at 20,000 francs each, he attributed three landscapes to the same painter, valued two at 1000 francs each, the third at but 200 francs (\$40). How he ever thought of ascribing those three landscapes to Murillo we cannot understand. If the

(1) See *Joseph Bonaparte en Amérique*, par Georges Bertin, Paris, 1893, pages 416-422

number 141, *Paysage noir*, Murillo, is the *Moonlight Landscape*, sold in 1845 with the remnants of his collection, it belonged to the Italian school. Our Madonna being from that time on attributed to Murillo, we have to look it up under that name in the catalogue of Joseph's collection. Here at once a strange fact strikes us: viz. the sale shortly after the arrival of his paintings in America of a Madonna and Child attributed to Murillo.

This shipment occurred after the mansion of Point Breeze in New Jersey had been bought and fitted for occupancy. Before that time the collection was scattered among the different estates belonging to Joseph. The most valuable of these was the Castle of Mortefontaine or Morfontaine, six miles from Senlis, and known in these States from a treaty signed there between France and the United States Sept. 30, 1800. Another estate was that of Survilliers, from which Joseph after his abdication as King of Spain assumed the title Count of Survilliers. After Napoleon's first abdication, Joseph bought a villa on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, the estate of Prangins. Here he carried his jewels and the greater part of his art treasures. His collection of paintings was composed of some 170 pieces belonging to all schools. There were some

gems among them. The greatest names were represented by at least one work: Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, Correggio, Velasquez. He owned three paintings by Titian and seven by Rubens or his school. The name of Murillo occurs seven times in the list. We see that the Escorial had furnished the choicest part of his collection. Then we find the names of Temiers, Snyders, Giordana Lucca, who had many paintings in the Escorial, and others.

The arrival of Joseph Bonaparte in this country reads like fiction. "A few hours before embarking on the French brig which was to take him to the United States, Joseph sent Mailliard to the Emperor, with a letter again urging his brother to exchange places and make his escape from France in Joseph's vessel. But Napoleon replied verbally to the messenger: 'Tell my brother that I have well considered his offer, and that I cannot accept it. It would seem like flying away from danger; besides, I could not leave behind me so many brave officers who have sacrificed everything for me. Tell my brother that I hope he will escape the cruisers of England, and arrive safely.'

"Joseph on receiving this last answer, sailed immediately for America. Had Napoleon accepted, he would probably have reached New

York safely, as every precaution had been taken to avoid detection. The vessel selected was a small common looking brig, the 'Commerce,' of two hundred tons, loaded with a cargo of Bordeaux wines for a market. She was a fast sailer, and was strongly built, and was commanded by a skilful captain, Messervey, a Swede by birth. Although three times on the high seas the brig was stopped and searched by English frigates, which were on the lookout for Napoleon, the passports and papers of the passengers on board had been so carefully prepared under fictitious names that they were not discovered. The captain of the brig did not even know who they were until a few days after Joseph had landed in New York.

"The newspapers having published an account of his successful escape, and given the name of the vessel, the poor captain could hardly contain himself, and called at once on Louis Mailliard, who assured him that it was true, and presented him, in all formality, to King Joseph. 'But why did you not tell me?' said he, 'I never would have betrayed him.' Mailliard had to explain to him that it was best to conceal the *réal* names and positions of his passengers for fear that he might have shown some hesitation or less assurance when boarded by the English

officers. 'I think you were right,' said the captain. 'I would have sunk my vessel rather than let them come on board; you were right.' Joseph was very much amused by his demonstration of Bonapartism, and sent him a very handsome present to show that he had appreciated his treatment on board." (1)

At first Joseph took up his residence in Philadelphia at "Bingham Hotel," a mansion which at one time had been the residence of John Penn, the last Colonial Governor of Pennsylvania. At the close of the Revolution this property was bought by Mr. Bingham, grandfather of Lord Ashburton, who was to buy a number of paintings from Joseph later on. It is said that Napoleon himself, unrolling one day a map of the United States and placing his finger on a spot on the banks of the Delaware, made the remark: "If I am ever forced to fly to America, I shall settle somewhere between Philadelphia and New York, where I can receive the earliest intelligence from France by ships arriving at either port." This may have been the reason for Joseph's choice of Bordentown as his permanent place of residence. The State of New Jersey granted him the right to possess real

(1) Bonaparte's Park and the Murats, by E. M. Woodward, Trenton, N. J., 1879, pages 32, 33.



estate without being a citizen, and the estate of Point Breeze being for sale, Joseph purchased the property and soon made improvements on it to the amount of \$900,000.

While his first residence was being prepared he sent for his art treasures scattered among the castles and villas owned by him in the Old World, in Mortefontaine, Prangins and elsewhere. (1) The first residence was partly destroyed by fire on January 3, 1820, through the negligence of a guest who left a wood fire burning in his room, locked the door and took the key with him. But the fire was soon discovered and all valuables saved. Joseph then built another mansion, more beautiful than the first one.

"Nowhere in the State could a more charming site be found. For nearly a mile, the Crosswicks Creek winds along the northern boundary of the park, fifty feet below the level of the promontory from which, more than a century ago, the grounds received this name. On this promontory Joseph built his house, commanding a fine view of the Delaware, and, in its leafy settlements, conspicuous to all who journeyed up and down the stream. Months were spent in clearing the woods of underbrush, rolling the

(1) Georges Bertin, 1. c., page 420.

lawn, bridging ravines, building summer houses and rustic seats and laying out walks and drives. A strip of marshy ground separated the point from the wood-crowned height at the western extremity of the park. Through this the creek ebbed and flowed as far as the Trenton road, where it was fed by a shallow winding brook. Joseph threw a bridge across the bed of the brook, filled up the hollow in the highway and transformed the marsh into a pretty lake. By the waterside, where the grassy bank was lowest, stood a large white house with grass-green shutters,—the residence of Prince Charles and his wife Zenaide. Elsewhere, save only on the willow-shaded causeway between the lake and creek, the ground rose abruptly to the level of the park. There were scattered about other dwellings and outhouses, and beyond was an inclosure well stocked with graceful deer. All around rose thousands of forest trees, arching over the drives and bridle-paths, filling the ravines with dark, dense foliage, and sheltering the hillside down to the border of the creek. There nature was left untouched, for art could add nothing to her charms." (1)

With regard to his own dwelling-house we

(1) Bordentown and the Bonapartes, Scribner's Monthly, vol. xxi, page 34.

read that he erected a vast edifice on the plan of an Italian palace, with a courtyard open on one side. This superb mansion was enriched with his entire collection of paintings, busts, statues, precious stones, ancient relics, and curiosities, which he had collected in France, Italy and Spain. Every luxury which wealth could purchase and every thing contributing to comfort and taste which art, learning, and refinement could suggest, adorned and embellished this palatial seat of hospitality. At Bordentown alone he expended on his estate nearly a million dollars. (1)

Alas! little is left now of that former splendor. The Count's house is gone. The gardener's house and the cook's remain, while the lake-house (the lake itself no longer exists) has been converted into a summer boarding house. Many of the trees have been cut down, the lawn is unkept, and there are few traces of the former beauty of the place. (2)

Here he entertained many guests and to one of them he must have sold the Madonna Gonzaga. While Joseph was at Bordentown his art treasures were not lost to the world, for

(1) The Napoleon Dynasty, by the Berkeley Men, N. Y., 1856, page 387.

(2) Bordentown and the Bonapartes. 1b. page 45.

during his long exile he had many visitors, among them the most eminent Americans of the day—Webster, Adams, and Clay, Commodore Stewart, General Scott, and Commodore Richard Stockton. (1) Moreover some of his choice paintings were exhibited in Philadelphia and New York. Raphael Meng's "Nativity" taken from the altar of a Spanish cathedral, the Murillos and a few others were thus shown to the admiring public of the two cities. That the Madonna Gonzaga was for a while in Philadelphia we know from the fact that a mezzotint copy of the painting was made there. Two specimens of this mezzotint can be seen in Ryan and Duffee's studio, Boston. The first one that was found had only the picture; the inscription was cut out. It was at first looked upon as a French mezzotint. Then the second one was discovered. It bears the following inscription, "*Mary and the Infant Christ*, Philadelphia. In officina B. V. inspr. Published by the N. A. Bibliographic Institution, *Reynolds* del. *Gaiger* sculp." The name of the painter is unfortunately erased. It is a better copy than the European lithographs of the same time. The composition is rendered so carefully in all details, that the artist while at his painstaking

(1) Ib. page 38.



BOSTON

MADONNA GONZAGA  
(PHILADELPHIA MEZZOTINT)



work must have had the original before him. This confirms our theory that No. 9 of the inventory, Virgin and Child, attributed to Murillo, was our painting.

When Joseph thought of turning his entire collection into money, he made up a first list of the paintings, appraising them at their supposed value. The estimation of the entire collection was a sum of 722,000 francs. Two paintings were gone already, numbers 9 and 11: "9—Une Vierge avec l'Enfant, Murillo, ce no. est nul, il est parti. 11—Une cuisinière, ce no. est nul, il est parti." Joseph Bonaparte owned two more Madonnas by Murillo. Both were taken to London in 1836 where they found a ready market. It must be admitted that the third one, this No. 9, was the Madonna Gonzaga. The family, from which it was purchased in our days, passed from father to son the tradition that the Madonna bought from them by Mr. P. E. Duffee was purchased by one of their ancestors from a member of the Napoleonic house. We have therefore four facts from which we may safely conclude that the Boston picture belonged to Joseph Bonaparte's collection in his mansion of Point Breeze, in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. From copies we know that the Madonna in question passed at that time as a

painting by Murillo; from Joseph's collection one Madonna and Child attributed to Murillo was sold in the States; a tradition exists that the Boston painting was purchased from a member of Napoleon's family; the fourth is this, that this same picture must have been in Philadelphia in the early part of last century, for it was copied there, and this mezzotint copy is of all old copies the one which comes nearest the original composition.

Joseph Bonaparte when he entered this country needed funds. He turned into cash anything he could sell. Queen Julie, his wife, was at Brussels preparing for the marriage celebration of her eldest daughter Zenaide. The dowry was to be 700,000 francs. To find this sum the Queen first sold Joseph's sword for 107,000 francs. (1) Then she offered for sale the estate of Prangins for a sum of 500,000 francs. The ex-king himself disposed by and by of the jewels seized in the Spanish capital. "Many of the crown jewels of Spain were still in his possession. They were guarded with jealous care. The visitors were admitted to the room where they lay concealed, but one who had that mark of favor shown her wrote

(1) See:—Le roi Joseph Bonaparte, lettres d'exile inédites, page 57.



as follows: 'Several clusters looked like jeweled handles of swords; others, like portions of crowns, rudely broken off; others still, like lids of small boxes; many were entire ornaments. He (Joseph) showed us the crown and ring he wore when King of Spain; also the crown, robe and jewels in which Napoleon was crowned.' "(1) His property of Mortefontaine passed also into other hands. With the funds thus raised he paid for his acquisitions in the New World, but still he had to part with many of his paintings. He himself lived beyond his income, and his brother, the fallen Emperor, needed help in St. Helena.

As soon as Joseph had settled in Point Breeze, he inquired about Napoleon's welfare. The faithful Las Casas notified him about his brother's distress in St. Helena in a letter written from Frankfort, February 21, 1818. "Sire, your august brother, on my forced parting from him, was in a wretched condition in every respect. His health was poor, his soul alone was impassible and rose above adversity and ill-treatment. He lacked the very necessities of life. Every month he was obliged to break some piece of his silverware to make up for the small allowance granted by the English." (2) Joseph sent the faithful

(1) Scribner's 1. c., page 37.

(2) *Mémoires du roi Joseph*, V. X., page 249.

count a check of £1000 to reimburse funds loaned to Napoleon who, it is stated in a letter of August 16th, of the same year, needed for his expenses a yearly sum of 150,000 francs.

Thus by and by over thirty paintings disappeared from the gallery of Point Breeze; most of them were sold; some few given as presents, such as the "Europe" by Noel Coypel; one of them, "The Boar Hunt" by Snyders, may be the one now on exhibition in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. It had been sold in Europe to the Duke of Durcal, in 1836, and was later bought by an American family. On his first trip to England he took with him some choice pieces which found a ready market in London. The remaining part of his collection was sold at auction, September 17 and 18, 1845, at Borden-town. Some of these paintings are now in The Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE PAINTING IN BOSTON.

Why our Madonna was so long hidden in the Puritan city of Boston has been explained by Dr. Gifford, Rector of the Brookline Baptist Church, in his Christmas sermon of 1913: "The picture was brought from Paris to the United States and found a resting place in New England. A resting place, not a home for many years; a home is a question of atmosphere quite as much as of housing. When the picture reached New England the teeth of Protestantism were on edge against anything belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. The Puritan Fathers had eaten sour grapes and their children's teeth were on edge. Our Puritan ancestors had many virtues; love of art was not one of them; patience with those whose religious convictions differed from their own had small place among our fathers.

No dim religious light  
Through windows richly dight

fell on the Puritan worshipper; he wanted white light on manuscript sermons; ear-gates were wide open. The beauty of holiness 'did not include form and color. Art is long and outlasts prejudices; environment modifies heredity; the children of the Puritan love art and beauty. The Holy Family is one of the finest paintings in Boston. At a time when movies reproduce the shifting stage, it is well to turn again to the art that pictures the One who is the same yesterday, today and forever."

The Madonna Gonzaga remained immured during three generations; the last one was born and bred under the very roof where the painting remained hidden, hardly knew of its existence and had never seen it. "Works of art acquired by a parent, prized by a son, tolerated by a grandson, are often neglected and scattered by his descendants." Those words by Sir Martin Conway come true once more. It fell to the lot of a portraitist of the city of Boston, Mr. Patrick E. Duffee, to restore this masterpiece to the art world. Gifted with a vast experience in matters of art and with great ability to trace a painting back to the school and the artist to whom it is to be attributed, he had the first idea of the loss of the Madonna Gonzaga in Europe. An engraving of the painting was

shown him. "Here," he said, "is a lost Madonna by Raphael." From that moment he was on the lookout.

Let us now quote Mr. Duffee's own words in an interview published by the Philadelphia Ledger, June 29, 1913: "Being a lover of art, of course I determined to keep my eyes open in the hope of stumbling on the painting some day. I do not claim that I had the slightest hope of finding it in Boston, however. The way I did stumble on it was through an invitation to take Sunday supper with a gentleman of artistic taste. Though I had known him for some years, I had never gone to his house.

"On this occasion I noticed a Van Dyck on the walls and asked where it came from. My host replied that it had been brought from New Orleans by his uncle, an artist, who had inherited it from his father. I asked if they had any other paintings, never dreaming, of course, of Raphael's lost Madonna. The reply was rather careless, to the effect that there was one more in the garret.

"Of course I asked to see it. My host took me at once to the garret, or at least to the door. That door had not been opened in so long that we had to work for a long time to get it unlocked. We poured kerosene in the lock and after con-

siderable time got it open. There was a quantity of valuable and beautiful ornaments of one sort or another, but this was the only painting. It did not take very long to convince me that I had stumbled upon the lost Raphael or the finest copy that had ever been made of that great artist's work!"

From the day of its reappearance, the painting by its marvelous beauty created a great sensation. The Boston papers, *The Post*, *The Globe*, *The Transcript*, hailed its discovery. We read in the *Boston Sunday Globe*, March 3, 1912, "Certainly the painting of this Madonna's face and the face of the Christ Child must have been done by a great master—a master of technique and a genius in the revelation of a beauty that well might be called divine. The color harmony is exquisite and the manner in which the reds, blues, yellows and greens are blended in this picture show a master mind behind it. But it is the wonderful expression in the face that attracts the most attention—especially the expression in the face of the Christ Child. One must come back to that word divine in describing it."

The *Boston Evening Transcript*, September 21, 1912, describes it in the words of Nathan Haskell Dole: "One might almost believe that

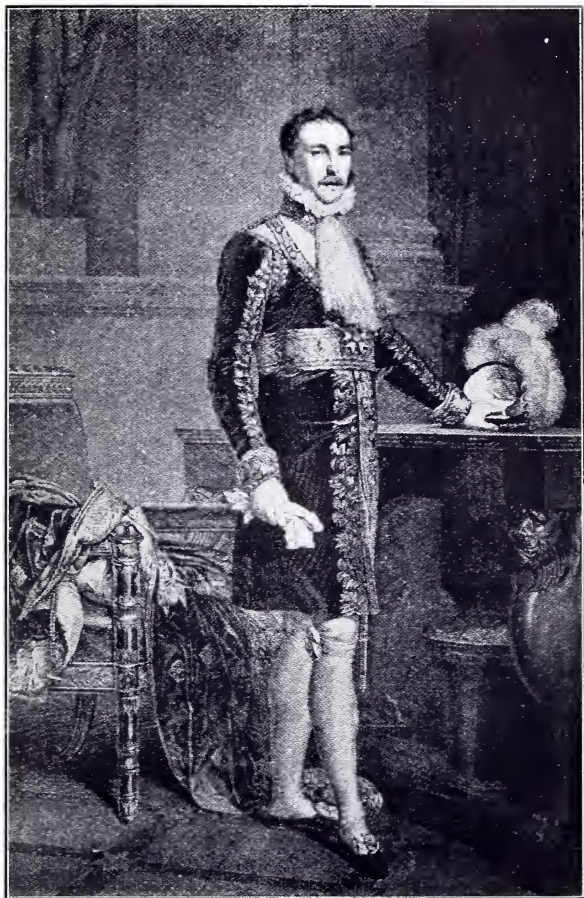
the rose colored bodice had been dipped in living roses. The lovely folds of the outer garments are of the blue of heaven itself, and the flesh tints deserve only the name of immaculate, significant of the divine soul that animates the faces of mother and boy. But in a Madonna one looks for the expression. What a marvelous mingling of the sweet pride of motherhood with the infinite foreboding that is veiled under the tender lids and curves the mouth with thoughts too deep for utterance! Most of Raphael's Infant Christs are painted without clothing. This, perhaps the solitary exception, is completely draped. The pure white of the little garment seems to be symbolical. The sleeve is turned up just above the wrist and the chubby hands are crossed in an attitude of natural devotion. The right foot rests on the mother's left hand. The absolute simplicity of the whole pose, the freedom from anything affected or sophisticated, is one of the great charms of this wonderful picture. The mother's face is of the most perfect oval, and is not of too marked Italian type. Indeed, one might see in it just a hint of the loveliest characteristics of a young Hebrew woman, especially in the rather long but still delicate nose, with its graceful curves and sensitive nostrils. The Child is chubby

and human, with wide eyes and lovely lips, serious, as befits His Divine origin, and yet with a gleam of childish life in His expression."

When expressing their opinion regarding the author of the painting, the papers of course were conservative. The *Globe* announced the discovery of a painting of a Madonna and Child, "said to be by Raphael." A few weeks after, mentioning the painting again, The *Globe* adds, "There are many reasons to believe that it is by the brush of the great Raphael." The *Boston Transcript* wrote September 21, 1912; "There is no manner of doubt that it is in the Raphaelesque style." The *Boston Herald* announced it in the following words: "Raphael's painting called 'Mary and the Infant Child,' which aroused widespread interest when it was discovered seven years ago in an attic in one of the suburbs of Boston, is attracting art lovers from far and near to the studio of Ryan and Duffee, 500 Boylston Street, where the painting is being exhibited."

The *Boston Post* has been especially instrumental in making this marvelous painting known. The impression it creates on visitors is described in its issue of March 2, 1913: "This painting is so wonderfully executed that many who have seen it immediately realize that a





EUGENE BEAUHARNAIS, DUKE OF LEUCHTENBERG



feeling of awe and devotion is demanded of them. In fact, the painting represents a very close relationship, on the part of the artist, with Him from whom all things are and have their being. This seems to radiate from the face of the Mother Saint and return in the greatest of childlike simplicity from the Infant Christ. And as it permeates the very air around this sacred bit of canvas, those who really love art and understand the wonders it portrays, feel that this picture has transported them to the heights of artistic expression. In fact, Boston rises one step farther toward its goal of perfection by this fortunate contribution to the world's greatest treasure."

After the discovery of the painting the new owners looked for copies or reproductions of one kind or another. The first one was unearthed in a southern branch of the very family to which the original had belonged. It was a mezzotint, believed at first to have been made in France, when, recently, a second specimen of the same work was brought to the studio. The inscription on it proved the American origin of the mezzotint.

Then a book case was found, which, it is claimed, was at one time the property of Napoleon. It has miniatures painted on ivory of the Sistine Madonna and of the Madonna Gonzaga.

Another very curious copy, an oil painting, was sold at an auction in the salesrooms of Leonard and Company, Bromfield Street, Boston. From some differences in the composition and coloring it could easily be seen that the painter did not copy from the original but from some old engraving. The painting is signed Sao Ricardo. There is no such name. The copyist perhaps finding on the engraving before him the initials "S. R." (Santi Raphael), with the carelessness peculiar to the painters of his time, forged out of them the signature "Sao Ricardo."

A fifth copy, an old Italian miniature painted on porcelain, was found in an Italian family of Boston. It now belongs to the writer. Another copy is a lithograph made in Munich of the Leuchtenberg Madonna. An old lithograph made in Berlin, Germany, was found in the Convent of the Cenacle, Brighton, Mass. The original is attributed to Murillo. Miss Freeman, Beacon Street, Boston, owns a small reproduction of the painting. Of this one also the original is attributed to Murillo. Two specimens of a chromolithograph are owned one by a Miss Kelly, the second by the Misses McGail, Newbury Street, Boston. In Ryan and Duffee's studio there are two more chromolithographs, one made in Paris, the other one



BOSTON

MADONNA LEUCHTENBERG

(MUNICH LITHOGRAPHY)



in Berlin. They do not give the name of the original painter. A beautiful oil copy at Miss A. Thayer's, Boston, is attributed by family tradition to Van Dyck. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert L. Kelly, Malden, Mass., have a miniature copy on porcelain. It is in the family over a hundred years. A fifteenth copy, an oil painting on canvas, is in Father Murphy's Rectory, South Boston. The straining board bears an inscription done with the pencil in times gone by, and containing the words, "die heilige Junfrau, Murillo." This is a copy of the Madonna Leuchtenberg. Three more have been found in Newton, Mass. Others still are known to exist in Boston.

The Extension Magazine was instrumental in calling the attention of the American public to this composition. The owners of the original were thus made to know of the existence of other old copies.

Reverend Henry Willman wrote from Janesville, Wisconsin: "For several years I have been looking for some reference regarding a painting of 'Mary and the Infant Christ,' which is in the possession of a family in this city. The first reference or illustration I have seen is that in the Extension Catholic Monthly referring to a painting now in your possession. This

illustration is an exact copy of the painting I refer to. The family in whose possession it is has lost the written history of the picture, but the family tradition is that their grandfather valued it as a masterpiece. It truly looks it. The size of the picture is 15 inches wide and 18 inches long. It was brought West from New York State about 1840."

Sister Mary Loretta, Providence Academy, Vancouver, Washington, gave some information about an old copy in that State. "There is a beautiful copy of this Madonna in a Jesuit Church in one of the first Indian Missions of this State. The painting was brought from Europe by one of the early Missionaries. It is considered a work of art. It has a history all its own."

O'Connor's Art Gallery, Trinity College, Washington, D. C., harbors "an exact copy of this same subject—an exquisite painting on porcelain". This painting is said to be a copy of the Madonna Leuchtenberg.

Milton Lytle, Philadelphia, Penn., wrote about her copy: "My copy of the picture is painted on canvas, 14x17 inches, and is precisely like the illustration in the newspaper, answering to the description in every respect, the colors and arrangement of the clothing on the figures being



as those given. If you have the original, I have an excellent copy."

In the same city another copy exists in the Convent of Notre Dame, West Rittenhouse Square. A beautiful copy belongs to Mrs. Gage, Chicago. From Lake Providence, Louisiana, the following letter was sent to the studio by Nora Hooker Fischer: "We have had in our family for years a beautiful painting on copper plate of the Madonna Leuchtenberg, marked so, and it is the same in every particular as the cut which you gave to the Monitor. My Madonna is exquisite. The paint is full of thousands of tiny cracks and yet upon holding it from the eye—say two feet—they cannot be seen—the coloring has not faded and is soft and most lovely. It is quite the gem of pictures in this part of the country. The copper plate is  $9\frac{1}{4}$  inches by  $11\frac{1}{4}$  inches. The picture was brought to this country by a Bavarian about fifty or sixty years ago. He had gotten into political difficulties in the upper Palatinate and came to the new world with his treasures."

A number of photos of old copies were sent to the studio with no further information about the existence of other lithographs or oil paintings. Amongst all copies, the Leuchtenberg Madonna is the most famous. This, however, is no longer

mentioned by authors on Murillo as a work by the Spanish master.

This Madonna Leuchtenberg is now in Petrograd, Russia. After the death of Eugène Beauharnais, the first Duke of Leuchtenberg, his eldest son, Augustus, took the title, and after his death it was assumed by his youngest brother, Maximilian. Maximilian married a Russian Grand Duchess and became a dignitary of the Russian Court, so he took his residence in St. Petersburg and removed his gallery there.

But all these copies put side by side with the original only show that the Madonna Gonzaga, or the Madonna della Sedia, cannot be copied in a manner worthy of the original. Raphael is and will remain forever the foremost painter of the Madonna. He towers above all other artists "*quasi inter viburna cypressus.*"

Our remarks on the Madonna Gonzaga we conclude with the words from the Boston Sunday Post, March 2, 1913. "A Raphael; at the mere whisper of such a magic word the whole world becomes spellbound. Wonder, delight, and awe take possession of our souls and throw us into a whirl of contending emotions. Of this cause it is hard to give a sufficient analysis unless by good fortune one has stood before the face of a 'Madonna' or studied the countless

phases of expression in the 'Transfiguration.' Admiring centuries have looked up with almost sacred adoration to the masterpieces that war in all its ravages has spared them. Generations have realized that Raphael's art was proof of absolute harmony with nature's God, thereby making this genius of the world of art an inspired man of uncommon mould, who could infuse the sublime love of a higher being into the face and action of a Madonna or cause the radiance of innocence and joy to beam forth from the features of his Infants."

**A. M. D. C.**

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